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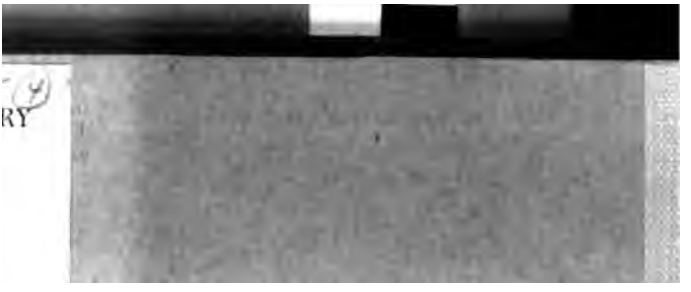

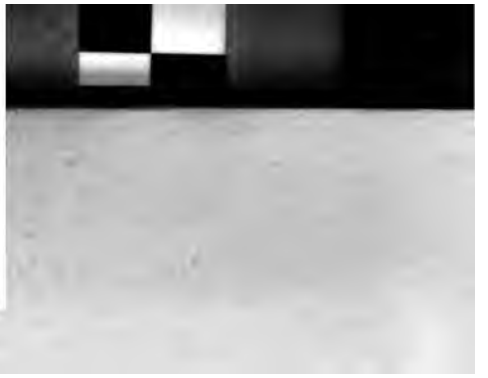

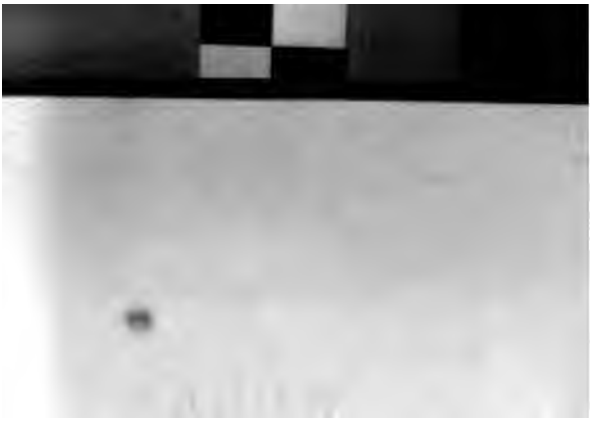

THE

WORKS

OF

SAMUEL JOHNSON, L. L. D.

A NEW EDITION,

IN SIX VOLUMES.

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BY ARTHUR MURPHY, ESQ.

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A

DISSERTATION

UPON

THE GREEK COMEDY,

TRANSLATED FROM BRUMOY.*

ADVERTISEMENT.

I CONCLUDE this work according to my promise, with an account of the Comic Theatre, and entreat the reader, whether a favourer or an enemy of the ancient drama, not to pass his censure upon the authors or upon me, without a regular perusal of this whole work. For, though it seems to be composed of pieces of which each may precede or follow without dependence upon the other, yet all the parts, taken together, form a system which would be destroyed by their disjunction. Which way shall we come at the knowledge of the ancients' shows, but by comparing together all that is left of them? The value and necessity of this comparison determined me to publish all, or to publish nothing. Besides, the reflections on each piece, and on the general taste of antiquity, which, in my opinion, are not without importance, have a kind of obscure gradation, which I have carefully endeavoured to preserve, and of which the thread would be lost by him who should slightly glance sometimes upon one piece, and sometimes upon another. It is a structure which I have endeavoured to make as near to regularity as I could, and which must be seen in its full extent and in proper succession. The reader who skips here and there over the book, might make

* Published by Mrs. Lennox in 4to. 1759. To the third volume of this work the following Advertisement is prefixed. "In this volume, the Discourse on the Greek Comedy, and the general conclusion, are translated by the celebrated author of the Rambler. The Comedy of the Birds, and that of Peace, by a young Gentleman. The Comedy of the Frogs, by the learned and ingenious Dr. Gregory Sharpe. The Discourse upon the Cyclops, by John Bourrya, Esq. The Cyclops, by Dr. Grainger, author of the translation of Tibullus." E.

ing to prejudice the reader by an apology
ients, or my own manner. I have not clain
ing others to determine, by my opinion, tl
m which I think due to the authors of the
nor do I think that their reputation in tl
ıght to depend upon my mode of thinking o
thoughts, which I leave entirely to the ju
lic.

A

DISSERTATION, &c.

I.

Reasons why Aristophanes may be reviewed without translating him entirely.

I was in doubt a long time, whether I should meddle at all with the Greek comedy, both because the pieces which remain are very few, the licentiousness of Aristophanes, their author, is exorbitant, and it is very difficult to draw from the performances of a single poet, a just idea of Greek comedy. Besides, it seemed that tragedy was sufficient to employ all my attention, that I might give a complete representation of that kind of writing, which was most esteemed by the Athenians and the wiser Greeks,* particularly by Socrates, who set no value upon comedy or comic actors. But the very name of that drama, which in polite ages, and above all others in our own, has been so much advanced, that it has become equal to tragedy, if not preferable, incline me to think that I may be partly reproached with an imperfect work, if, after having gone as deep as I could into the nature of Greek tragedy, I did not at least sketch a draught of the comedy.

I then considered, that it was not wholly impossible to surmount, at least in part, the difficulties which had stopt me, and to go somewhat farther than the learned writers,† who have published in French some pieces of Aristophanes; not that I pretend to make large translations. The same reasons which have hindered with respect to the more noble parts of the Greek drama, operate with double force upon my present subject. Though ridicule, which is the business of comedy, be not less uniform in all times, than the passions which are moved by tragic compositions; yet, if diversity of manners may sometimes disguise the passions themselves,

* There was a law which forbade any judge of the Areopagus to write comedy.

† Madame Dacier, M. Boivin.

how much greater change will be made in jocularities? The truth is, that they are so much changed by the course of time, that pleasantry and ridicule become dull and flat much more easily than the pathetic becomes ridiculous.

That which is commonly known by the term jocular and comic, is nothing but a turn of expression, an airy phantom, that must be caug[illegible] point. As we lose this point, we lose the j[illegible] nothing but dulness in its place. A lucky [illegible] filled a company with laughter, will have [illegible] t, because it is shown single and separate fr[illegible] ance which gave it force. Many satirical jest[illegible] ent books, have had the same fate; their sp[illegible] ted by time, and have left nothing to us but i[illegible] but the most biting passages have preserve[illegible] blunted.

But besides this objection, which extends universally to all translations of Aristophanes, and many allusions of which time has deprived us, there are loose expressions thrown out to the populace to raise laughter from corrupt passions, which are unworthy of the curiosity of decent readers, and which ought to rest eternally in proper obscurity. Not every thing in this infancy of comedy was excellent, at least it would not appear excellent at this distance of time, in comparison of compositions of the same kind, which lie before our eyes; and this is reason enough to save me the trouble of translating, and the reader that of perusing. As for that small number of writers who delight in those delicacies, they give themselves very little trouble about translations, except it be to find fault with them; and the majority of people of wit, like comedies that may give them pleasure, without much trouble of attention, and are not much disposed to find beauties in that which requires long deductions to find it beautiful. If Helen had not appeared beautiful to the Greeks and Trojans but by force of argument, we had never been told of the Trojan war.

On the other side, Aristophanes is an author more considerable than one would imagine. The history of Greece could not pass over him, when it comes to touch upon the people of Athens; this alone might procure him respect, even when he was not considered as a comic poet. But when his writings are taken into view, we find him the only author from whom may be drawn a just idea of the comedy of his age; and farther, we find in his pieces, that he often makes attacks upon the tragic writers, particularly upon the three chief, whose valuable remains we have had under examination; and, what

is yet worse, fell sometimes upon the state, and upon the gods themselves.

II. These considerations have determined me to follow, in my representation of this writer, the same method which I have taken in several tragic pieces, which is that of giving an exact analysis as far as the matter would allow, from which I deduce four important systems. First, Upon the nature of the comedy of that age, without admitting that of Menander.* Secondly, Upon the vices and government of the Athenians. Thirdly, Upon the notion we ought to entertain of Aristophanes, with respect to Eschylus, Sophocles and Euripides. Fourthly, Upon the jest which he makes upon the gods. These things will not be treated in order, as a regular discourse seems to require, but will arise sometimes separately, sometimes together, from the view of each particular comedy, and from the reflections which this free manner of writing will allow. I shall conclude with a short view of the whole, and so finish my design.

The chief heads of this discourse.

III. I shall not repeat here what Madame Dacier, and so many others before her, have collected of all that can be known relating to the history of comedy. Its beginnings are as obscure as those of tragedy, and there is an appearance that we take these two words in a more extensive meaning; they had both the same original, that, is, they began among the festivals of the vintage, and were not distinguished from one another but by a burlesque

History of Comedy.

* Menander, an Athenian, son of Diopethes and Hegestrates, was apparently the most eminent of the writers of the new comedy. He had been a scholar of Theophrastus; his passion for the women brought infamy upon him; he was squint eyed, and very lively. Of the one hundred and eighty comedies, or, according to Suidas, the eighty which he composed, and which are all said to be translated by Terence, we have now only a few fragments remaining He flourished about the 115th Olympiad, three hundred and eighteen years before the Christian Æra. He was drowned as he was bathing in the port of Pireus. I have told in another place what is said of one Philemon, his antagonist, not so good a poet as himself, but one who often gained the prize. This Philemon was older than him, and was much in fashion in the time of Alexander the Great. He expressed all his wishes in two lines, "To have health, and fortune, and pleasure, and never to be in debt, is all I desire." He was very covetous, and was pictured with his fingers hooked, so that he set his comedies at a high price. He lived about a hundred years, some say a hundred and one. Many tales are told of his death; Valerius Maximus says, that he died with laughing at a little incident; seeing an ass eating his figs, he ordered his servant to drive her away; the man made no great haste, and the ass eat them all. "Well done," says Philemon, "now give her some wine." Apulcius and Quintilian placed this writer much below Menander, but give him the second place.

or serious chorus, which made all the soul and all the body. But, if we give these words a stricter sense, according to the notion which has since been formed, comedy was produced after tragedy, and was in many respects a sequel and imitation of the works of Eschylus. It is in reality nothing more than an action set before the sight by the same artifice of representation. Nothing is different but the object, which is merely ridicule. rue comedy will be easily admitted, if we ta Horace, who must have known better than of dramatic works. This poet supports the ıave endeavoured to establish in the second ngly as to amount to demonstrative proof.

Horace † express 'Thespis is said to have been the first inve of tragedy, in which he carried about in eared with the dregs of wine, of whom so s declaimed." This was the first attempt both of tragedy and comedy; for Thespis made use only of one speaker, without the least appearance of dialogue. "Eschylus afterwards exhibited them with more dignity. He placed them on a stage, somewhat above the ground, covered their faces with masks, put buskins on their feet, dressed them in trailing robes, and made them speak in a more lofty style." Horace omits invention of dialogue, which we learn from Aristotle.‡ But, however, it may be well enough inferred from the following words of Horace; this completion is mentioned while he speaks of Eschylus, and therefore to Eschylus it must be ascribed; "Then first appeared the old comedy, with great success in its beginning." Thus we see that the Greek comedy arose after tragedy, and by consequence tragedy was its parent. It was formed in imitation of Eschylus, the inventor of the tragic drama; or, to go yet higher into antiquity, had its original from Homer, who was the guide of Eschylus. For, if we credit Aristotle,§ comedy had its birth from the Margetes, a satirical poem of Homer, and tragedy from the Iliad and Odyssey. Thus the design and artifice of comedy were drawn from Homer and Eschylus. This will appear less surprising since the ideas of the human mind are always gradual, and arts are seldom invented but by imitation. The first idea contains the seed of the second; this second, expanding itself, gives birth to a third; and so on. Such is the progress of the mind of man; it proceeds in its

Who is author of Comedy.

* Greek Theatre part i. vol. i.
‡ Poet. ch. 4.
† Hor. Poet. v. 275.
§ Poet. ch. 4.

productions step by step, in the same manner as nature multiplies her works by imitating, or repeating her own act, when she seems most to run into variety. In this manner it was that comedy had its birth, its increase, its improvement, its perfections, and its diversity.

IV. But the question is, who was the happy author of that imitation, and that show, whether only one, like Eschylus, of tragedy, or whether they were several? for neither Horace, nor any before him, explained this.* This poet only quotes three writers who had reputation in the old comedy, Eupolis,† Cratinus,‡ and Aristophanes, of whom he says, "That they, and others who wrote in the same way, reprehended the faults of particular persons with excessive liberty." These are probably the poets of the greatest reputation, though they were not the first, and we know the names of many others.§ Among these three we may be sure that Aristophanes had the greatest character, since not only the king of Persia‖ expressed a high esteem of him to the Grecian ambassadors, as of a man extremely useful to his country, and Plato¶ rated him so high, as to say, that the graces resided in his bosom; but likewise because he is the only writer of whom any comedies have made their way down to us,

* "The alterations which have been made in tragedy, were perceptible, and the authors of them unknown; but comedy has lain in obscurity, being not cultivated, like tragedy, from the time of its original; for it was long before the magistrates began to give comic choruses. It was first exhibited by actors, who played voluntarily, without orders of the magistrates. From the time that it began to take some settled form, we know its authors, but are not informed who first used masks, added prologues, increased the number of the actors, and joined all the other things which now belong to it. The first that thought of forming comic fables, were Epicharmus and Phormys, and consequently this manner came from Sicily; Crates was the first Athenian that adopted it, and forsook the practice of gross raillery, that prevailed before." Aristot. ch. 5. Crates flourished in the 82d Olympiad, four hundred and fifty years before our Æra, twelve or thirteen years before Aristophanes.

† Eupolis was an Athenian; his death, which we shall mention presently, is represented differently by authors, who almost all agree that he was drowned. Elian adds an incident which deserves to be mentioned; he says, (book x. Of Animals) that one Augeus of Eleusis, made Eupolis a present of a fine mastiff, who was so faithful to his master, as to worry to death a slave who was carrying away some of his comedies. He adds, that when the poet died at Egene, his dog staid by his tomb till he perished by grief and hunger.

‡ Cratinus of Athens, who was son of Callimedes, died at the age of ninety-seven. He composed twenty comedies, of which nine had the prize; he was a daring writer, but a cowardly warrior.

§ Hertelius has collected the sentences of fifty Greek poets of the different ages of comedy.

‖ Interlude of the second act of the comedy, entitled, "The Archarniens."

¶ Epigram attributed to Plato.

through the confusion of times. There are not indeed any proofs that he was the inventor of comedy, properly so called, especially since he had not only predecessors who wrote in the same kind, but it is at least a sign, that he had contributed more than any other to bring comedy to the perfection in which he left it. We shall therefore not inquire farther, whether regular comedy was the work of a single mind, which seems [illegible]d, or of several contemporaries, such as [illegible]race quotes. We must distinguish three fo[illegible]dy wore, in consequence of the genius of the [illegible] the laws of the magistrates, and the chang[illegible]ment of many into that of few.

That comedy,* wh[illegible]s the ancient, and which, accordi[illegible]it, was after Eschylus, retained [illegible] its original state, and of the licen[illegible]ch it practised, while it was yet without regularity, and uttered loose jokes and abuse upon the passers by from the cart of Thespis. Though it was now properly modelled, as might have been worthy of a great theatre and a numerous audience, and deserved the name of a regular comedy, it was not yet much nearer to decency. It was a representation of real actions, and exhibited the dress, the motions, and the air, as far as could be done in a mask, of any one who was thought proper to be sacrificed to public scorn. In a city so free, or to say better, so licentious as Athens was at that time, nobody was spared, not even the chief magistrate, nor the very judges, by whose voice comedies were allowed or prohibited. The insolence of these performances reached to open impiety, and sport was made equally with men and gods.† These are the features by which the greatest part of the compositions of Aristophanes will be known. In which it may be particularly observed, that not the least appearance of praise will be found, and therefore certainly no trace of flattery or servility.

The old, middle, and new comedy.

This licentiousness of the poets, to which in some sort Socrates fell a sacrifice, at last was restrained by a law. For the government which was before shared by all the inhabitants, was now confined to a settled number of citizens. It was ordered, that no man's name should be mentioned on the stage; but poetical malignity was not long in finding the secret of defeating the purpose of the law, and of making

* This history of the three ages of comedy, and their different characters, is taken in part from the valuable fragments of Platonius.

† It will be shown how and in what sense this was allowed.

themselves ample compensation for the restraint laid upon authors, by the necessity of inventing false names. They set themselves to work upon known and real characters, so that they had now the advantage of giving a more exquisite gratification to the vanity of poets, and the malice of spectators. One had the refined pleasure of setting others to guess, and the others that of guessing right by naming the masks. When pictures are so like, that the name is not wanted, nobody inscribes it. The consequence of the law therefore, was nothing more than to make that be done with delicacy, which was done grossly before; and the art, which was expected would be confined within the limits of duty, was only partly transgressed with more ingenuity. Of this Aristophanes, who was comprehended in this law, gives us good examples in some of his poems. Such was that which was afterwards called the middle comedy.

The new comedy, or that which followed, was again an excellent refinement, prescribed by the magistrates, who, as they had before forbid the use of real names, forbade afterwards real subjects, and the train of choruses,* too much given to abuse; so that the poets saw themselves reduced to the necessity of bringing imaginary names and subjects upon the stage, which at once purified and enriched the theatre; for comedy from that time was no longer a fury armed with torches, but a pleasing and innocent mirror of human life.

Chacun peint avec art dans ce nouveau miroir
S'y vit avec plaisir, ou crut ne s'y pas voir!
L'avare des premieres rit du tableau fidelle
D'un avare souvent tracé sur son modelle;
Et mille fois un fat finement exprime
Meconnut le portrait sur lui-meme forme.†

The comedy of Menander and Terence, is, in propriety of speech, the fine comedy. I do not repeat all this after so many writers, but just to recall it to memory, and to add to what they have said, something they have omitted, a singular effect of public edicts appearing in the successive progress of the art. A naked history of poets and of poetry, such as has been often given, is a mere body without a soul, unless it be enlivened by an account of the birth, progress, and perfection of the art, and of the causes by which they were produced.

* Perhaps the chorus was forbid in the middle age of the comedy. Platonius seems to say so.

† Despreaux Art. Poet, chant.

VI. To omit nothing essential which concerns this part, we shall say a word of the Latin comedy. When the arts passed from Greece to Rome, comedy took its turn among the rest; but the Romans applied themselves only to the new species, without chorus or personal abuse; though perhaps they might have played some translations of the old or the middle comedy, for Pliny gives an account of one which was represented in his own time. But the Roman [illegible] is modelled upon the last species of the Gr[illegible] less its different ages according as its a[illegible] or polished. The pieces of Livius Andro[illegible] nt and less refined than those of the wri[illegible] he art from him, may be said to compose [illegible] e old Roman comedy and tragedy. To h[illegible] Nevius, his contemporary, and Ennius, wh[illegible] s after him. The second age comprises [illegible] s, Accius, and Plautus; unless it shall be [illegible] reckon Plautus with Terence, to make the third and highest age of the Latin comedy, which may properly be called the new comedy, especially with regard to Terence, who was the friend of Lelius, and the faithful copier of Menander.

The Latin comedy.

But the Romans, without troubling themselves with this order of succession, distinguished their comedy by the dresses† of the players. The robe called *prætexta*, with large borders of purple, being the formal dress of the magistrates in their dignity, and in the exercise of their office, the actors, who had this dress, gave its name to the comedy. This is the same with that called *Trabeata*,‡ from *Trabea*, the dress of the consuls in peace, and the generals in triumph. The second species introduced the senators, not in great offices, but as private men; this was called *Toges*, from *Togata*. The last species was named *Tabernaria*, from the tunic, or the common dress of the people, or rather from the mean houses which were painted on the scene. There is no need of mentioning the farces, which took their name and original from Atella, an ancient town of Campania in Italy, because they differed from the low comedy only by greater licentiousness; nor of those which were called Palliates, from the Greek, a cloak, in which the Greek characters were dressed upon the Roman stage, because that habit only distinguished

* The year of Rome 514, the first year of the 135th Olympiad.

† *Prætextæ, Togatæ, Tabernariæ.*

‡ Suet de Claris Grammat, says, that C. Gelissus, librarian to Augustus, was the author of it.

the nation, not the dignity or character, like those which have been mentioned before. To say truth, these are but trifling distinctions; for, as we shall show in the following pages, comedy may be more usefully and judiciously distinguished, by the general nature of its subject. As to the Romans, whether they had, or had not, reason for these names, they have left us so little upon the subject which is come down to us, that we need not trouble ourselves with a distinction which affords us no solid satisfaction. Plautus and Terence, the only authors of whom we are in possession, give us a fuller notion of the real nature of their comedy, with respect at least to their own times, than can be received from names and terms, from which we have no real exemplification.

The Greek comedy is reduced only to Aristophanes.

VII. Not to go too far out of our way, let us return to Aristophanes, the only poet in whom we can now find the Greek comedy. He is the single writer, whom the violence of time has in some degree spared, after having buried in darkness, and almost in forgetfulness, so many great men, of whom we have nothing but the names and a few fragments, and such slight memorials as are scarcely sufficient to defend them against the enemies of the honour of antiquity; yet these memorials are like the last glimmer of the sitting sun, which scarce affords us a weak and fading light; yet from this glimmer we must endeavour to collect rays of sufficient strength, to form a picture of the Greek comedy, approaching as near as possible to the truth.

Of the personal character of Aristophanes little is known; what account we can give of it must therefore be had from his comedies. It can scarcely be said with certainty of what country he was; the invectives of his enemies so often called in question his qualification as a citizen, that they have made it doubtful. Some said he was of Rhodes, others of Egena, a little island in the neighbourhood, and all agreed that he was a stranger. As to himself, he said that he was the son of Philip, and born in the Cydathenian quarter; but he confessed that some of his fortune was in Egena, which was probably the original seat of his family. He was, however, formally declared a citizen of Athens, upon evidence, whether good or bad, upon a decisive judgment, and this for having made his judges merry by an application of a saying of Telemachus,* of which this is the sense: "I am, as my mother tells me, the son of Philip; for my own part, I know little of the matter, for what child knows his own father?" This piece of merriment did him as much good as Archias

* Homer, Odyssey.

received from the oration* of Cicero, who said that that poet was a Roman citizen. An honour, which if he had not inherited by birth, he deserved for his genius.

Aristophanes† flourished in the age of the great men of Greece, particularly of Socrates and Euripides, both of whom he outlived. He made a great figure during the whole Peloponnesian war, not merely as a comic poet by whom the people were diverted, but as the censor of the government, as a man kept in pa[illegible] reform it, and almost to act the part of th[illegible] public. A particular account of his come[illegible] into his personal character as a poet, an[illegible] of his genius, which is what we are most [illegible]. It will, however not be amiss to prep[illegible] a little by the judgments that had been p[illegible] y the critics of our own time, without fo[illegible] ancients that deserves great respect.

Aristophanes censured and praised.

VI[illegible]s," says father Rapin, "is not exact in the contrivance of his fables; his fictions are not probable; he brings real characters on the stage too coarsely and too openly. Socrates, whom he ridicules so much in his plays, had a more delicate turn of burlesque than himself, and had his merriment without his impudence. It is true that Aristophanes wrote amidst the confusion and licentiousness of the old comedy, and he was well acquainted with the humour of the Athenians, to whom uncommon merit always gave disgust, and therefore he made the eminent men of his time the subject of his merriment. But the too great desire which he had to delight the people by exposing worthy characters upon the stage, made him at the same time an unworthy man; and the turn of his genius to ridicule was disfigured and corrupted by the indelicacy and outrageousness of his manners. After all, his pleasantry consists chiefly in new coined puffy language. The dish of twenty-six syllables, which he gives in his last scene of his Female Orators, would please few tastes in our days. His language is sometimes obscure, perplexed and vulgar, and his frequent play with words, his oppositions of contradictory terms, his mixture of tragic and comic, of serious and burlesque, are all flat; and his jocularity, if you examine it to the bottom, is all false. Menander is diverting in a more elegant manner; his style is pure, clear, elevated, and natural; he persuades like an orator, and instructs like

* Orat. pro. Arhia. poeta.

† In the 85th year of the Olympiad, 457 before our Æra, and 317 of the foundation of Rome.

a philosopher; and if we may venture to judge upon the fragments that remain, it appears that his pictures of civil life are pleasing, that he makes every one speak according to his character, that every man may apply his pictures of life to himself, because he always follows nature, and feels for the personages which he brings upon the stage. To conclude, Plutarch in his comparison of these authors says, that the muse of Aristophanes is an abandoned prostitute, and that of Menander a modest woman."

It is evident that the whole character is taken from Plutarch. Let us now go on with this remark of father Rapin, since we have already spoken of the Latin comedy, of which he gives us a description.

"With respect to the two Latin comic poets, Plautus is ingenious in his designs, happy in his conceptions, and fruitful of invention. He has, however, according to Horace, some low jocularities, and those smart sayings, which made the vulgar laugh, made him be pitied by men of higher taste. It is true, that some of his jests are extremely good, and others likewise are very bad. To this every man is exposed, who is too much determined to make sallies of merriment; they endeavour to raise that laughter by hyperboles, which would not arise by a just representation of things. Plautus is not quite so regular as Terence, in the scheme of his designs, or in the distributions of his acts, but he is more simple in his plot; for the fables of Terence are commonly complex, as may be seen in his Andrea, which contains two amours. It was imputed as a fault to Terence, that to bring more action upon the stage, he made one Latin comedy out of two Greek; but then Terence unravels his plot more naturally than Plautus, which Plautus did more naturally than Aristophanes; and though Cesar calls Terence but one half of Menander, because, though he had softness and delicacy, there was in him some want of sprightliness and strength; yet he has written in a manner so natural and so judicious, that, though he was then only a copy, he is now an original. No author has ever had a more exact sense of pure nature. Of Cecilius, since we have only a few fragments, I shall say nothing. All that we know of him is told us by Varrus, that he was happy in the choice of subjects."

Rapin omits many others for the same reason, that we have not enough of their works to qualify us for judges. While we are upon this subject, it will perhaps not displease the reader to see what that critic's opinion is of Lopes de Vega and Moliere. It will appear, that, with respect to Lopes de Vega, he is rather too profuse of praise; that in

speaking of Moliere he is too parsimonious. This piece, will, however, be of use to our design, when we shall examine to the bottom what it is that ought to make the character of comedy.

"No man has ever had a greater genius for comedy than Lopes de Vega the Spaniard. He had a fertility of wit, joined with great beauty of conception, and a wonderful readiness of compo[illegible] written more than three hundred comedi[illegible] ne gave reputation to his pieces; for his [illegible] well established, that a work, which ca[illegible] was sure to claim the approbation of the [illegible] mind too extensive to be subjected to rul[illegible] limits. For that reason he gave himself [illegible] s, on which he could always depend wi[illegible] en he wrote he consulted no other laws th[illegible] uditors, and regulated his manner more by [illegible] vork than by the rules of reason. Thus h[illegible] ples of unity, and all the superstitions of probability." This is certainly not said with a design to praise him, and must be connected with that which immediately follows. "But as for the most part, he endeavours at too much jocularity, and carries ridicule to too much refinement; his conceptions are often rather happy than just, and rather wild than natural; for by subtilizing merriment too far, it becomes too nice to be true, and its beauties lose their power of striking by being too delicate and acute.

"Among us, nobody has carried ridicule in comedy farther than Moliere. Our ancient comic writers brought no characters higher than servants, to make sport upon the theatre; but we are diverted upon the theatre of Moliere by marquises and people of quality. Others have exhibited in comedy no species of life above that of a citizen; but Moliere shows us all Paris, and the court. He is the only man amongst us, who has laid open those features of nature by which he is exactly marked, and may be accurately known. The beauties of his pictures are so natural, that they are felt by persons of the least discernment, and his power of pleasantry received half its force from his power of copying. His Misanthrope is, in my opinion, the most complete, and likewise the most singular character that has ever appeared upon the stage; but the disposition of his comedies is always defective some way or another. This is all which we can observe in general upon comedy."

Such are the thoughts of one of the most refined judges of works of genius, from which, though they are not all oracu-

lous, some advantages may be drawn, as they always make some approaches to truth.

Madame Dacier* having her mind full of the merit of Aristophanes, expresses herself in this manner; "No man had ever more discernment than him, in finding out the ridiculous, nor a more ingenious manner of showing it to others. His remarks are natural and easy, and, what very rarely can be found, with great copiousness he has great delicacy. To say all at once, the *attic* wit, of which the ancients made such boast, appears more in Aristophanes than in any other that I know of in antiquity. But what is most of all to be admired in him, is, that he is always so much master of the subject before him, that without doing any violence to himself, he finds a way to introduce naturally things which at first appeared most distant from his purpose; and even the most quick and unexpected of his desultory sallies appear the necessary consequence of the foregoing incidents. This is that art which sets the dialogues of Plato above imitation, which we must consider as so many dramatic pieces, which are equally entertaining by the action and by the dialogue. The style of Aristophanes is no less pleasing than his fancy; for, besides its clearness, its vigour, and its sweetness, there is in it a certain harmony so delightful to the ear, that there is no pleasure equal to that of reading it. When he applies himself to vulgar mediocrity of style, he descends without meanness; when he attempts the sublime, he is elevated without obscurity; and no man has ever had the art of blending all the different kinds of writing so equally together. After having studied all that is left us of Grecian learning, if we have not read Aristophanes, we cannot yet know all the charms and beauties of that language."

Plutarch's sentiment upon Aristophanes and Menander.

IX. This is a pompous eulogium; but let us suspend our opinion, and hear that of Plutarch, who, being an ancient, well deserves our attention, at least after we have heard the moderns before him. This is then the sum of his judgment concerning Aristophanes and Menander. To Menander he gives the preference, without allowing much competition. He objects to Aristophanes, that he carries all his thoughts beyond nature, that he writes rather to the crowd than to men of character; that he affects a style obscure and licentious; tragical, pompous, and mean, sometimes serious, and sometimes ludicrous, even to puerility; that he makes none of his personages speak according to any distinct character, so that in

* Preface to Plautus. Paris, 1684.

his scenes the son cannot be known from the father, the citizen from the boor, the hero from the shopkeeper, or the divine from the serving man. Whereas the diction of Menander, which is always uniform and pure, is very justly adapted to different characters, rising when it is necessary to vigorous and sprightly comedy, yet without transgressing the proper limits, or losing sight of nature, in which Menander, says Plutarch, has [illegible] to which no other writer has arrived. [illegible] les himself, has ever found the art of mak[illegible] ly suitable to women and children, to ol[illegible] vinities and heros? Now Menander has [illegible] cret, in the equality and flexibility of h[illegible] ough always the same, is nevertheless d[illegible] nt occasions; like a current of clear wa[illegible] o the thoughts of Plutarch, which running [illegible] ferently turned, complies with all their tu[illegible] orward, without changing any thing of its [illegible] y. Plutarch, mentions it as a part of the merit of Menander, that he began very young, and was stopped only by old age, at a time when he would have produced the greatest wonders, if death had not prevented him. This, joined to a reflection, which he makes as he returns to Aristophanes, shows, that Aristophanes continued a long time to display his powers; for his poetry, says Plutarch, is a strumpet that affects sometimes the airs of a prude, but whose impudence cannot be forgiven by the people, and whose affected modesty is despised by men of decency. Menander, on the contrary, always shows himself a man agreeable and witty, a companion desirable upon the stage, at table, and in gay assemblies; an extract of all the treasures of Greece, who deserves always to be read, and always to please. His irresistible power of persuasion, and the reputation which he has had, of being the best master of language of Greece, sufficiently shows the delightfulness of his style. Upon this article of Menander. Plutarch does not know how to make an end; he says, that he is the delight of philosophers fatigued with study; that they use his works as a meadow enamelled with flowers, where a purer air gratifies the sense; that, notwithstanding the powers of the other comic poets of Athens, Menander has always been considered as possessing a salt peculiar to himself, drawn from the same waters that gave birth to Venus. That, on the contrary, the salt of Aristophanes is bitter, keen, coarse, and corrosive; that one cannot tell whether his dexterity, which has been so much boasted, consists not more in the characters than in the expression, for he is charged with playing often upon words,

with affected antithetical allusions; that he has spoiled the copies which he endeavoured to take after nature; that artifice in his plays is wickedness, and simplicity, brutishness: that his jocularity ought to raise hisses rather than laughter; that his amours have more impudence than gaiety; and that he has not so much written for men of understanding, as for minds blackened with envy and corrupted with debauchery.

The justification of Aristophanes.

X. After such a character there seems no need of going further; and one would think that it would be better to bury for ever the memory of so hateful a writer, that makes us so poor a recompense for the loss of Menander, who cannot be recalled. But without showing any mercy to the indecent or malicious sallies of Aristophanes any more than to Plautus his imitator, or at least the inheritor of his genius, may it not be allowed us to do, with respect to him, what, if I mistake not, Lucretius* did to Ennius, from whose muddy verses he gathered jewels? *Ennii de stercore gemmas.*

Besides, we must not believe that Plutarch, who lived more than four ages after Menander, and more than five after Aristophanes, has passed so exact a judgment upon both, but that it may be fit to re-examine it. Plato, the contemporary of Aristophanes, thought very differently, at least of his genius: for in his piece called "The Entertainment," he gives that poet a distinguished place, and makes him speak, according to his character, with Socrates himself: from which, by the way, it is apparent, that this dialogue of Plato was composed before the time that Aristophanes wrote his "Clouds," against Socrates. Plato is likewise said to have sent a copy of Aristophanes to Dionysius the tyrant, with advice to read it diligently, if he would attain a complete judgment of the state of the Athenian republic.

Many other scholars have thought, that they might depart somewhat from the opinion of Plutarch. Frischlinus, for example, one of the commentators upon Aristophanes, though he justly allows his taste to be less pure than that of Menander, has yet undertaken his defence against the outrageous censure of the ancient critic. In the first place he condemns without mercy his ribaldry and obscenity. But this part, so worthy of contempt, and written only for the lower people, according to the remark of Boivin, bad as it is, after all is not the chief part which is left of Aristophanes. I will not say with Frischlinus, that Plutarch seems in this to contradict himself, and in reality commends the poet, when he accuses him of having adapted his language to the stage: by

* Brumoy has mistaken Lucretius for Virgil.

the stage, in this place, he meant the theatre of Farces, on which low mirth and buffoonery was exhibited. This plea of Frischlinus is a mere cavil; and though the poet had obtained his end, which was to divert a corrupted populace, he would not have been less a bad man, nor less a despicable poet, notwithsta[illegible] his defender. To be able in the highest d[illegible]ls and libertines, will not make a poet; it [illegible]y this defence that we must justify the cha[illegible]nes. The depraved taste of the crowd, [illegible]ay Cratinus and his company, because t[illegible] low buffoonery enough for their taste, wi[illegible]tophanes, since Menander found a way of [illegible]y giving a sort of comedy, not indeed so m[illegible]epresents it, but less licentious than before. Nor is Aristophanes better justified by the reason which he himself offers, when he says, that he exhibited debauchery upon the stage, not to corrupt the morals, but to mend them. The sight of gross faults, is rather a poison than a remedy.

The apologist has forgot one reason, which appears to me to be essential to a just account. As far as we can judge by appearance, Plutarch had in his hands all the plays of Aristophanes, which were at least fifty in number. In these he saw more licentiousness than has come to our hands, though in the eleven that are still remaining, there is much more than could be wished.

Plutarch censures him in the second place for playing upon words; and against this charge Frischlinus defends him with less skill. It is impossible to exemplify this in French. But after all, this part is so little, that it deserved not so severe a reprehension, especially since among those sayings, there are some so mischievously malignant, that they became proverbial, at least by the sting of their malice, if not by the delicacy of their wit. One example will be sufficient; speaking of the tax gatherers or the excisemen of Athens, he crushes them at once by observing *non quod essent* ταμιαι *sed* λαμιαι. The word *lamiæ* signified *walking spirits*, which, according to the vulgar notion, devoured men; this makes the spirit of the sarcasm against the tax gatherers. This cannot be rendered in our language: but if any thing as good had been said in France on the like occasion, it would have lasted too long, and, like many other sayings amongst us, been too well received. The best is, that Plutarch himself confesses that it was extremely applauded.

The third charge is, a mixture of tragic and comic style. This accusation is certainly true; Aristophanes often gets

into the buskin; but we must examine upon what occasion. He does not take upon him the character of a tragic writer; but, having remarked that his trick of parody was always well received by a people who liked to laugh at that for which they had been just weeping, he is eternally using the same craft; and there is scarcely any tragedy or striking passage known by memory by the Athenians, which he does not turn into merriment, by throwing over it a dress of ridicule and burlesque, which is done sometimes by changing or transposing the words, and sometimes by an unexpected application of the whole sentence. These are the shreds of tragedy, in which he arrays the comic muse, to make her still more comic. Cratinus had before done the same thing; and we know that he made a comedy called "Ulysses," to burlesque Homer and his "Odyssey;" which shows, that the wits and poets are, with respect to one another, much the same at all times, and that it was at Athens as here. I prove this system by facts, particularly with respect to the merriment of Aristophanes upon our three celebrated tragedians. This being the case, the mingled style of Aristophanes, will, perhaps, not deserve so much censure as Plutarch has vented. We have no need of the Travesty of Virgil, nor the parodies of our own time, nor of the Lutrin of Boileau, to show us that this medley may have its merit upon particular occasions.

The same may be said in general of his obscurity, his meannesses, and his high flights, and of all the seeming inequality of style, which puts Plutarch in a rage. These censures can never be just upon a poet, whose style has always been allowed to be perfectly Attic, and of an Atticism which made them extremely delightful to the lovers of the Athenian taste. Plutarch, perhaps, rather means to blame the choruses, of which the language is sometimes elevated, sometimes burlesque, always very poetical, and therefore in appearance not suitable to comedy. But the chorus, which had been borrowed from tragedy, was then all the fashion, particularly for pieces of satire, and Aristophanes admitted them like the other poets of the old, and perhaps of the middle comedy; whereas Menander suppressed them, not so much in compliance with his own judgment, as in obedience to the public edicts. It is not, therefore, this mixture of tragic and comic that will place Aristophanes below Menander.

The fifth charge is, that he kept no distinction of character; that, for example, he makes women speak like orators, and orators like slaves; but it appears by the characters which he ridicules, that this *objection falls* of itself. It is sufficient

to say, that a poet who painted, not imaginary characters, but real persons, men well known, citizens whom he called by their names, and showed in dresses like their own, and masks resembling their faces, whom he branded in the sight of a whole city, extremely haughty and full of derision; it is sufficient to say, that such a poet could never be supposed to miss his characters. The applause which his licentiousness produced, is too n; besides, if he had not succeeded, he exp e fate of Eupolis, who, in a comedy called an," having imprudently pulled to pieces p more powerful than himself, was laid hold ore effectually than those he had drowned e.

The condemna ancy of Aristophanes, as having too much r founded. Such was the turn of a species ich all licentiousness was allowed; in a na every thing a subject of laughter, in its jealousy of immoderate liberty, and its enmity to all appearance of rule and superiority; for the genius of independency naturally produces a kind of satire more keen than delicate, as may be easily observed in most of the inhabitants of islands. If we do not say with Longinus, that a popular government kindles eloquence, and that a lawful monarchy stifles it; at least it is easy to discover by the event, that eloquence in different govenments takes a different appearance. In republics it is more sprightly and violent, and in monarchies more insinuating and soft. The same thing may be said of ridicule; it follows the cast of genius, as genius follows that of government. Thus the republican raillery, particularly of the age which we are now considering, must have been rougher than that of the age which followed it, for the same reason, that Horace is more delicate, and Lucilius more pointed. A dish of satire was always a delicious treat to human malignity; but that dish was differently seasoned, as the manners were polished more or less. By polished manners I mean that good breeding, that art of reserve and self-restraint, which is the consequence of dependence. If one was to determine the preference due to one of those kinds of pleasantry, of which both have their value, there would not need a moment's hesitation, every voice would join in favour of the softer, yet without contempt of that which is rough. Menander will, therefore, be preferred, but Aristophanes will not be despised, especially since he was the first who quitted that wild practice of satirizing at liberty right or wrong, and by a comedy of another cast made way for the manner of Menander, more agreeable yet, and less

dangerous. There is yet another distinction to be made between the acrimony of the one, and the softness of the other; the works of the one are acrimonious, and of the other soft, because the one exhibited personal, and the other general characters; which leaves us still at liberty to examine, if these different designs might not be executed with equal delicacy.

We shall know this by a view of the particulars; in this place we say only that the reigning taste, or the love of striking likenesses, might justify Aristophanes for having turned, as Plutarch says, art into malignity, simplicity into brutality, merriment into farce, and amour into impudence; if in any age a poet could be excused for painting public folly and vice in their true colours.

There is a motive of interest at the bottom which disposed Elian, Plutarch, and many others to condemn this poet without appeal. Socrates, who is said to have been destroyed by a poetical attack, at the instigation of two wretches,* has too many friends among good men, to have pardon granted to so horrid a crime. This has filled them with an implacable hatred against Aristophanes, which is mingled with the spirit of philosophy, a spirit, wherever it comes, more dangerous than any other. A common enemy will confess some good qualities in his adversary; but a philosopher, made partial by philosophy, is never at rest till he has totally destroyed him who has hurt the most tender part of his heart: that is, has disturbed him in his adherence to some character, which, like that of Socrates, takes possession of the mind. The mind is the freest part of man, and the most tender of its liberties; possessions, life, and reputation, may be in another's power, but opinion is always independent. If any man can obtain that gentle influence, by which he ingratiates himself with the understanding, and makes a sect in a commonwealth, his followers will sacrifice themselves for him, and nobody will be pardoned that dares to attack him justly or unjustly, because that truth, real or imaginary, which he maintained, is now become an idol. Time will do nothing for the extinction of this hatred: it will be propagated from age to age; and there is no hope that Aristophanes will ever be treated with tenderness by the disciples of Plato, who made Socrates his hero. Every body else may, perhaps, confess, that Aristophanes, though in one instance a bad man, may neverthe-

* It is not certain that Aristophanes did procure the death of Socrates; but, however, he is certainly *criminal for having*, in the "Clouds," accused him publicly *of impiety*.

less be a good poet; but distinctions, like these, will not be admitted by prejudice and passion, and one or other dictates all characters, whether good or bad.

As I add my own reasons, such as they are, for or against Aristophanes, to those of Frischlinus his defender, I must not omit one thing which he has forgot, and which, perhaps, without taking in the rest, put Plutarch out of humour, which is that perpetua through all the comedies of Aristophane of Harlequin on the Italian theatre. onages are clouds, frogs, wasps, and bird to a comic stage of a very different appear ught them strange things; and yet strange to us, who have a newer kind of comedy, reeks were unacquainted. This is what ou rged with, and what may be proved beyor s charge comprises all the rest, and agains retend to justify him. It would be of no use to say, that Aristophanes wrote for an age that required shows, which filled the eye, and grotesque paintings in satirical performances; that the crowds of spectators, which sometimes neglected Cratinus to throng Aristophanes, obliged him more and more to comply with the ruling taste, lest he should lose the public favour by pictures more delicate and less striking; that in a state, where it was considered as policy to lay open every thing that had the appearance of ambition, singularity, or knavery, comedy has become a haranguer, a reformer, and a public counsellor, from whom the people learned to take care of their most valuable interests; and that this comedy, in the attempt to lead and to please the people, claimed a right to the strongest touches of eloquence, and had likewise the power of personal painting peculiar to herself. All these reasons, and many others, would disappear immediately, and my mouth would be stopped with a single word, with which every body would agree: my antagonist would tell me that such an age was to be pitied, and passing on from age to age, till he came to our own, he would conclude flatly, that we are the only possessors of common sense; a determination with which the French are too much reproached, and which overthrows all the prejudice in favour of antiquity. At the sight of so many happy touches, which one cannot help admiring in Aristophanes, a man might, perhaps, be inclined to lament that such a genius was thrown into an age of fools; but what age has been without them? And have not we ourselves reason to fear, lest posterity should judge of Moliere and his age, as we judge of Aristophanes? Menander altered the taste, and was applaud-

ed in Athens; but it was after Athens was changed. Terence imitated him at Rome, and obtained the preference over Plautus, though Cæsar called him but a demi Menander, because he appears to want that spirit and vivacity which he calls the *vis comica*. We are now weary of the manner of Menander and Terence, and leave them for Moliere, who appears like a new star in a new course. Who can answer, that in such an interval of time as has past between these four writers there will not arise another author, or another taste, that may bring Moliere, in his turn, into neglect? Without going further, our neighbours, the English, think he wants force and fire. Whether they are right, or no, is another question; all that I mean to advance is, that we are to fix it as a conclusion, that comic authors must grow obsolete with the modes of life, if we admit any one age, or any one climate, for the sovereign rule of taste. But let us talk with more exactness, and endeavour by an exact analysis to find out what there is in comedy, whether of Aristophanes and Plautus, of Menander and Terence, of Moliere and his rivals, which is never obsolete, and must please all ages and all nations.

Remarkable difference between the state of comedy, and other works of genius, with regard to their duration.

XI. I now speak particularly of comedy; for we must observe that between that and other works of literature, especially tragedy, there is an essential difference, which the enemies of antiquity will not understand, and which I shall endeavour palpably to show.

All works show the age in which they are produced; they carry its stamp upon them; the manners of the times are impressed by indelible marks. If it be allowed, that the best of past times were rude in comparison with ours, the cause of the ancients is decided against them; and the want of politeness, with which their works are charged in our days, must be generally confessed. History alone seems to claim exemption from this accusation. Nobody will dare to say of Herodotus or Thucydides, of Livius or Tacitus, that which has been said without scruple of Homer and the ancient poets. The reason is, that history takes the nearest way to its purpose, and gives the characters and practices of nations, be they what they will: it has no dependence upon its subject, and offers nothing to examination, but the art of the narrative. An history of China well written, would please a Frenchman as well as one of France. It is otherwise with mere works of genius, they depend upon their subjects, and consequently upon the characters and the practices of the times in which they were written; this at least is the light in

circumstances of our own days. According to this prejudice, oratory depends more upon its subject than history, and poetry yet more than oratory. Our times, therefore, show more regard to Herodotus and Suetonius, than to Demosthenes and Cicero, and more to all these than to Homer or Virgil. Of this prejudice, there are regular gradations: and to come back to the point which we have left, we show, for the same imperceptible reason, less regard to tragic poets than to others. The reason is, that the subjects of their paintings are more examined than the art. Thus comparing the Achilles, and Hippolytus of Euripides, with those of Racine, we drive them off the stage, without considering that Racine's heros will be driven off in a future age, if the same rule of judgment be followed, and one time be measured by another.

Yet tragedy having the passions for its object, is not wholly exposed to the caprice of our taste, which would make our own manners the rule of human kind; for the passions of Grecian heroes are often dressed in external modes of appearance that disgust us, yet they break through the veil when they are strongly marked, as we cannot deny them to be in Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. The essence then gets the better of the circumstance. The passions of Greece and France do not so much differ by the particular characters of particular ages, as they agree by the participation of that which belongs to the same passion in all ages. Our three tragic poets will, therefore, get clear by suffering only a little ridicule, which falls directly upon their times; [illegible]

it becomes there quite a foreigner, because there are no longer the same originals, nor the same species of the ridiculous, nor the same spectators, but a set of merciless readers, who complain that they are tired with it, though it once filled Athens, Rome, or Paris, with merriment. This position is general, and comprises all poets and all ages. To say all at once, comedy is the slave of its subject, and of the reigning taste; tragedy is not subject to the same degree of slavery, because the ends of the two species of poetry are different. For this reason, if we suppose that in all ages there are critics who measure every thing by the same rule, it will follow, that if the comedy of Aristophanes be become obsolete, that of Menander likewise, after having delighted Athens, and revived again at Rome, at last suffered by the force of time. The Muse of Moliere has almost made both of them forgotten, and would still be walking the stage, if the desire of novelty did not in time make us weary of that which we have too frequently admired.

Those who have endeavoured to render their judgment independent upon manners and customs, and of such men there have been always some, have not judged so severely either of times, or of writers; they have discovered that a certain resemblance runs through all polished ages, which are alike in essential things, and differ only in external manners, which, if we except religion, are things of indifference; that wherever there is genius, politeness, liberty or plenty, there prevails an exact and delicate taste, which however hard to be expressed, is felt by those that were born to feel it; that Athens, the inventress of all the arts, the mother first of the Roman, and then of general taste, did not consist of stupid savages; that the Athenian and Augustan ages having always been considered as times that enjoyed a particular privilege of excellence, though we may distinguish the good authors from the bad, as in our own days, yet we ought to suspend the vehemence of criticism, and proceed with caution and timidity before we pass sentence upon times and writers, whose good taste has been universally applauded. This obvious consideration has disposed them to pause; they have endeavoured to discover the original of taste, and have found that there is not only a stable and immutable beauty, as there is a common understanding in all times and places, which is never obsolete; but there is another kind of beauty, such as we are now treating, which depends upon times and places, and is therefore changeable. Such is the imperfection of every thing below, that one mode of beauty is never found without a mixture of the other, and from these two blended together, results what is called the taste of an age. I am now speaking of an

age sprightly and polite, an age which leaves works for a long time behind it, an age which is imitated or criticised when revolutions have thrown it out of sight.

Upon this incontestible principle, which supposes a beauty universal and absolute, and a beauty likewise relative and particular, which are mingled through one work in very different proportions, it is easy to give an account of the contrary judgments passed on Aristophanes. If we consider him only with [illegible] ies, which, though they do not please us, [illegible] ans, we shall condemn him at once, though [illegible] eauty may sometimes have its original in [illegible] ried to extravagance. Instead of comm[illegible] ; able to give merriment to the most refin[illegible] days, we shall proceed to place that peop[illegible] ticism, in the rank of savages whom we [illegible] rade, because they have no other qualifica[illegible] and plain understanding. But have not we [illegible] our more polished manners, beauties merely fashionable, which make part of our writings as the writings of former times; beauties of which our self love now makes us fond, but which, perhaps, will disgust our grandsons? Let us be more equitable, let us leave this relative beauty to its real value, more or less in every age; or, if we must pass judgment upon it, let us say that these touches in Aristophanes, Menander, and Moliere, were well struck off in their own time; but, that comparing them with true beauty, that part of Aristophanes was a colouring too strong, that of Menander was too weak, and that of Moliere was a peculiar varnish formed of one and the other, which, without being an imitation, is itself inimitable, yet depending upon time, which will efface it by degrees, as our notions, which are every day changing, shall receive a sensible alteration. Much of this has already happened since the time of Moliere, who, if he was now to come again, must take a new road.

With respect to unalterable beauties, of which comedy admits much fewer than tragedy, when they are the subject of our consideration, we must not too easily set Aristophanes and Plautus below Menander and Terence. We may properly hesitate with Boileau, whether we shall prefer the French comedy to the Greek and Latin. Let us only give, like him, the great rule for pleasing in all ages, and the key by which all the difficulties in passing judgment may be opened. This rule and this key are nothing else but the ultimate design of the comedy.

Etudiez la cour, et connoissez la ville;
L'une et l'au re est toujours en modéles fertile,
C'est par-là que Moliere illustrant ses écrits
Peut-être de son art eût remporté le prix,
Si moins ami du peuple en ses doctes peintures,
Il n'eût pont fait souvent grimacer ses figures,
Quitté pour le bouffon l'agréable et le fin,
Et sans honte à Terence allié Tabarin.*

In truth Aristophanes and Plautus united buffoonery and delicacy in a greater degree than Moliere; and for this they may be blamed. That which then pleased at Athens, and at Rome, was a transitory beauty which had not sufficient foundation in truth, and therefore the taste changed. But, if we condemn those ages for this, what age shall we spare? Let us refer every thing to permanent and universal taste, and we shall find in Aristophanes at least as much to commend as censure.

Tragedy more uniform than comedy.

XII. But before we go to his works it may be allowed to make some reflections upon tragedy and comedy. Tragedy, though different according to the difference of times and writers, is uniform in its nature, being founded upon the passions, which never change. With comedy it is otherwise. Whatever difference there is between Eschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides; between Corneille and Racine; between the French and the Greeks, it will not be found sufficient to constitute more than one species of tragedy.

The works of these great masters are, in some respects, like the sea nymphs, of whom Ovid says, "That their faces were not the same, yet so much alike that they might be known to be sisters."

Facias non omnibus una,
Nec diversa tamen, qualem decet esse sororum.

The reason is, that the passions give action and animation to them all. With respect to the comedies of Aristophanes and Plautus, Menander and Terence, Moliere and his imitators, if we compare them one with another, we shall find something of a family likeness, but much less strongly marked, on account of the different appearance which ridicule and pleasantry take from the different manners of every age. They will not pass for sisters, but for very distant relations. The muse of Aristophanes and Plautus, to speak of her with justice, is a bacchanal at least, whose malignant tongue is dipped in gall, or in poison dangerous as that of the aspic or

* Boileau Art. Poet. chant 3.

viper; but whose bursts of malice, and sallies of wit, often give a blow where it is not expected. The muse of Terence, and consequently of Menander, is an artless and unpainted beauty, of easy gaiety, whose features are rather delicate than striking, rather soft than strong, rather plain and modest than great and haughty, but always perfectly natural.

Ce n'est p[illegible]e semblable;
C'est un [illegible]itable.

The muse o[illegible] ways plainly dressed, but takes airs of qu[illegible]ve her original condition, so as to attire [illegible] magnificent apparel. In her manners s[illegible]e with foolery, force with delicacy, and g[illegible]ughtiness, with plainness and modesty. [illegible]ease the people, she gives a loose to farce, [illegible] folly of a moment, from which she immediately returns, and which lasts no longer than a slight intoxication. The first might be painted encircled with little satyrs, some grossly foolish, the others delicate, but all extremely licentious and malignant; monkeys always ready to laugh in your face, and to point out to indiscriminate ridicule, the good and the bad. The second may be shown encircled with geniuses full of softness and of candour, taught to please by nature alone, and whose honeyed dialect is so much the more insinuating, as there is no temptation to distrust it. The last must be accompanied with the delicate laughter of the court, and that of the city somewhat more coarse, and neither the one nor the other can be separated from her. The muse of Aristophanes and of Plautus can never be denied the honour of sprightliness, animation and invention; nor that of Menander and Terence the praise of nature and delicacy; to that of Moliere must be allowed the happy secret of uniting all the piquancy of the former, with a peculiar art which they did not know. Of these three sorts of merit, let us show to each the justice that is due, let us in each separate the pure and the true from the false gold, without approving or condemning either the one or the other in the gross. If we must pronounce in general upon the taste of their writings, we must indisputably allow that Menander, Terence and Moliere, will give most pleasure to a decent audience, and consequently that they approach nearer to the true beauty, and have less mixture of beauties purely relative, than Plautus and Aristophanes.

If we distinguish comedy by its subjects, we shall find three sorts among the Greeks, and as many among the Latins

all differently dressed; if we distinguish it by ages and authors, we shall again find three sorts; and we shall find three sorts a third time if we regard more closely the subject. As the ultimate and general rules of all these sorts of comedy are the same, it will, perhaps be agreeable to sketch them out before we give a full display of the last class. I can do nothing better on this occasion than transcribe the twenty-fifth reflection of Rapin upon poetry in particular.

XIII. "Comedy," says he,* "it is a representation of common life; its end is to show the faults of particular characters on the stage, to correct the disorder of the people by the fear of ridicule. Thus ridicule is the essential part of a comedy. Ridicule may be in words, or in things; it may be decent, or grotesque. To find what is ridiculous in every thing, is the gift merely of nature; for all the actions of life have their bright and their dark sides; something serious, and something merry. But Aristotle, who has given rules for drawing tears has given none for raising laughter; for this is merely the work of nature, and must proceed from genius, with very little help from art or matter. The Spaniards have a turn to find the ridicule in things much more than we; and the Italians, who are natural comedians, have a better turn for expressing it; their language is more proper for it than ours, by an air of drollery which it can put on, and of which ours may become capable when it shall be brought nearer to perfection. In short, that agreeable turn, that gaiety which yet maintains the delicacy of its character without falling into dulness or into buffoonery, that elegant raillery which is the flower of fine wit, is the qualification which comedy requires. We must, however, remember, that the true artificial ridicule, which is required on the theatre, must be only a transcript of the ridicule which nature affords. Comedy is naturally written, when being on the theatre, a man can fancy himself in a private family, or a particular part of the town, and meets with nothing but what he really meets with in the world; for it is no real comedy in which a man does not see his own picture, and find his own manners and those of the people among whom he lives. Menander succeeded only by this art among the Greeks; and the Romans, when they sat at Terence's comedies, imagined themselves in a private party; for they found nothing there which they had not been used to find in common company. The great art of comedy is to adhere to nature without deviation; to have general sentiments and expres-

Genral rules of comedy.

* Reflections sur la Poet. p. 154. Paris, 1684.

sions which all the world can understand; for the writer must keep it always in his mind, that the coarsest touches after nature will please more than the most delicate with which nature is inconsistent. However, low and mean words should never be allowed upon the stage, if they are not supported with som[illegible] overbs and vulgar smartnesses can neve[illegible] s they have something in them of nature [illegible] his is the universal principle of comedy; [illegible] ented in this manner must please, and not [illegible] e without it. It is by application to the [illegible] e that we arrive at probability, which is [illegible] guide to theatrical success. Without this p[illegible] ng is defective, and that which has it, is [illegible] follows this, can never go wrong; and the [illegible] ts of comedy proceed from the neglect of propriety, and the precipitation of incidents. Care must likewise be taken that the hints, made use of to introduce the incidents, are not too strong, that the spectator may enjoy the pleasure of finding out their meaning; but commonly the weak place in our comedy is the untying of the plot, in which we almost always fail, on account of the difficulty which there is in disentangling of what has been perplexed. To perplex an intrigue is easy, the imagination does it by itself; but it must be disentangled merely by the judgment, and is, therefore, seldom done happily; and he that reflects a very little, will find that most comedies are faulty by an unnatural catastrophe. It remains to be examined whether comedy will allow pictures larger than the life, that this strength of the strokes may make a deeper impression upon the mind of the spectators; that is, if a poet may make a covetous man more covetous, and a peevish man more impertinent and more troublesome than he really is. To which I answer, that this was the practice of Plautus, whose aim was to please the people; but that Terence, who wrote for gentlemen, confined himself within the compass of nature, and represented vice without addition or aggravation. However, these extravagant characters, such as the "Citizen turned Gentleman," and the "Hypochondric Patient of Moliere," have lately succeeded at court, where delicacy is carried so far; but every thing, even to provincial interludes, is well received if it has but merriment, for we had rather laugh than admire. These are the most important rules of comedy."

Three sorts of comedy.

XIV. These rules, indeed, are common to the three kinds which I have in my mind; but it is necessary to distinguish each from the rest, which may be

done by diversity of matter, which always makes some diversity of management. The old and middle comedy simply represented real adventures; in the same way some passages of history and of fable might from a class of comedies, which should resemble it without having its faults: such is the Amphitryon. How many moral tales, how many adventures ancient and modern, how many little fables of Æsop, of Phædrus, of Fontaine, or some other ancient poet, would make pretty exhibitions, if they were all made use of as materials by skilful hands? And have we not seen some like "Timon the Manhater," that have been successful in this way? This sort chiefly regards the Italians. The ancient exhibition called a satyre, because the satyrs played their part in it, of which we have no other instance than the Cyclops of Euripides, has, without doubt, given occasion to the pastoral comedies, for which we are chiefly indebted to Italy, and which are there more cultivated than in France. It is, however, a kind of exhibition that would have its charms, if it was touched with elegance and without meanness; it is the pastoral put into action. To conclude, the new comedy, invented by Menander, has produced the comedy properly so called in our times. This is that which has for its subject general pictures of common life, and feigned names and adventures, whether of the court or of the city. This third kind is incontestibly the most noble, and has received the strongest sanction from custom. It is likewise the most difficult to perform, because it is merely the work of invention, in which the poet has no help, from real passages, or persons, which the tragic poet always wakes use of. Who knows but by deep thinking, another kind of comedy may be invented wholly different from the three which I have mentioned; such is the fruitfulness of comedy; but its course is already too wide for the discovery of new fields to be wished, and on ground where we are already so apt to stumble, nothing is so dangerous as novelty imperfectly understood. This is the rock on which men have often split in every kind of pursuit: to go no further, in that of grammar and language; it is better to endeavour after novelty in the manner of expressing common things, than to hunt for ideas out of the way, in which many a man loses himself. The ill success of that odd composition Tragic Comedy, a monster wholly unknown to antiquity, sufficiently shows the danger of novelty in attempts like these.

Whether tragedy or comedy be the harder to write.

XV. To finish the parallel of the two dramas, a question may be revived equally common and important, which has been oftener proposed than well decided; it is, whether comedy or tragedy

be most easy or difficult to be well executed. I shall not have the temerity to determine positively a question which so many great geniuses have been afraid to decide; but if it be allowed to every literary man to give his reason for and against a mere work of genius, considered without respect to its good or bad tendency, I shall in a few words give my opinion, drawn from the nature of the two works, and the qualifications they demand. Horace* proposes a question nearly of the san been inquired whether a good poem be the ture; for my part I do not see much to be ut genius, nor by genius without knowled ecessary to the other, and the success depe peration." If we should endeavour to acco in imitation of this decision of Horace, i y at once, that supposing two geniuses equa the other comic, supposing the art likew , one would be as easy or difficult as the o hough satisfactory in the simple question put by Horace, will not be sufficient here. Nobody can doubt but genius and industry contribute their part to every thing valuable, and particularly to good poetry. But if genius and study were to be weighed one against the other, in order to discover which must contribute most to a good work, the question would become more curious, and, perhaps, very difficult of solution. Indeed, though nature must have a great part of the expense of poetry; yet no poetry lasts long that is not very correct; the balance, therefore, seems to incline in favour of correction. For it is not known that Virgil with less genius than Ovid, is yet valued more by men of exquisite judgment; or, without going so far, Boileau, the Horace of our time, who composed with so much labour, and asked Moliere where he found his rhyme so easily, has said, "If I write four words, I shall blot out three;" has not Boileau, by his polished lines, retouched and retouched a thousand times, gained the preference above the works of the same Moliere, which are so natural, and produced by so fruitful a genius! Horace was of that opinion, for when he is teaching the writers of his age the art of poetry, he tells them in plain terms, that Rome would excel in writing as in arms, if the poets were not afraid of the labour, patience, and time required to polish their pieces. He thought every poem was bad that had not been brought ten times back to the anvil, and required that a work should be kept nine years, as a child is nine months in the womb of its mother, to restrain that natu-

* Poet, v. 407.

ral impatience which combine with sloth and self love to disguise faults; so certain is it that correction is the touchstone of writing.

The question proposed comes back to the comparison which I have been making between genius and correction, since we are now engaged in inquiring whether there is more or less difficulty in writing tragedy or comedy; for as we must compare nature and study one with another, since they must both concur more or less to make a poet; so if we will compare the labours of two different minds in different kinds of writing, we must, with regard to the authors, compare the force of genius, and with respect to the composition, the difficulties of the task.

The genius of the tragic and comic writer will be easily allowed to be remote from each other. Every performance, be what it will, requires a turn of mind which a man cannot confer upon himself; it is purely the gift of nature, which determines those who have it, to pursue, almost in spite of themselves, the taste which predominates in their minds. Pascal found in his childhood, that he was a mathematician, and Vandyke that he was born a painter. Sometimes this internal direction of the mind does not make such evident discoveries of itself; but it is rare to find Corneille's who have lived long without knowing that they were poets. Corneille having once got some notion of his powers, tried a long time on all sides to know what particular direction he should take. He had first made an attempt in comedy, in an age when it was yet so gross in France that it could give no pleasure to polite persons. Melite was so well received when he dressed her out, that she gave rise to a new species of comedy and comedians. This success, which encouraged Corneille to pursue that sort of comedy of which he was the first inventor, left him no reason to imagine, that he was one day to produce those masterpieces of tragedy, which his muse displayed afterwards with so much splendour; and yet less did he imagine, that his comic pieces, which for want of any that were preferable, were then very much in fashion, would be eclipsed by another genius* formed upon the Greeks and Romans, and who would add to their excellencies improvements of his own, and that this modish comedy, to which Corneille, as to his idol, dedicated his labours, would quickly be forgot. He wrote first Medea, and afterwards the Cid, and, by that prodigious flight of his genius, he discovered, though late, that nature had formed him to run in no other course but that of

* Moliere.

Sophocles. Happy genius! that without rule or imitation, could at once take so high a flight; having once, as I may say, made himself an eagle, he never afterwards quitted the path, which he had worked out for himself, over the heads of the writers of his time; yet he retained some traces of the false taste whi e nation; but even in this, he deserves ou in time he changed it completely by the and those he occasioned. In short, Co tragedy, as Moliere for comedy. Mo is own genius sooner, and was not less h applause, though it often happened to h

L'Ig naissantes pièces
En l s de Contesses,
Vinssent po hef d'œuvre nouveau,
Et secoüer la tête à l' endroit le plus beau.

But, without taking any farther notice of the time at which either came to the knowledge of his own genius, let us suppose that the powers of tragedy and comedy were as equally shared between Moliere and Corneille, as they are different in their own nature, and then nothing more will remain than to compare the several difficulties of each composition, and to rate those difficulties together which are common to both.

It appears, first, that the tragic poet has in his subject an advantage over the comic, for he takes it from history; and his rival, at least in the more elevated and splendid comedy, is obliged to form it by his own invention. Now, it is not so easy as it might seem to find comic subjects capable of a new and pleasing form; but history is a source, if not inexhaustible, yet certainly so copious as never to leave the genius aground. It is true, that invention seems to have a wider field than history; real facts are limited in their number, but the facts which may be feigned have no end; but though, in this respect, invention may be allowed to have the advantage, is the difficulty of inventing to be accounted as nothing? To make a tragedy is to get materials together, and to make use of them like a skilful architect; but to make a comedy, is to build like Æsop in the air. It is in vain to boast that the compass of invention is as wide as the extent of desire; every thing is limited, and the mind of man like every thing else. Besides, invention must be in conformity to nature; but distinct and remarkable characters are very rare in nature herself. Moliere has got hold on the principal touches of ridicule. If any man should bring characters less strong, he

will be in danger of dulness. Where comedy is to be kept up by subordinate personages, it is in great danger. All the force of a picture must arise from the principal persons, and not from the multitude clustered up together. In the same manner, a comedy, to be good, must be supported by a single striking character, and not by under parts.

But, on the contrary, tragic characters are without number, though of them the general outlines are limited; but dissimulation, jealousy, policy, ambition, desire of dominion, and other interests and passions, are various without end, and take a thousand different forms in different situations of history: so that as long as there is tragedy, there may be always novelty. Thus the jealous and dissembling Mithridates, so happily painted by Racine, will not stand in the way of a poet who shall attempt a jealous and dissembling Tiberius. The stormy violence of an Achilles will always leave room for the stormy violence of an Alexander.

But the case is very different with avarice, trifling vanity, hypocrisy, and other vices, considered as ridiculous. It would be safer to double and treble all the tragedies of our greatest poets, and use all their subjects over and over, as has been done with Oedipus and Sophonisba, than to bring again upon the stage in five acts, a Miser, a Citizen turned Gentleman, a Tartuffe, and other subjects sufficiently known. Not that these popular vices are less capable of diversification, or less varied by different circumstances, than the vices and passions of heroes; but that if they were to be brought over again into comedies, they would be less distinct, less exact, less forcible, and consequently, less applauded. Pleasantry and ridicule must be more strongly marked than heroism and pathos, which support themselves by their own force. Besides, though these two things of so different natures could support themselves equally in equal variety, which is very far from being the case; yet comedy, as it now stands, consists not in incidents, but in characters. Now it is by incidents only that characters are diversified, as well upon the stage of comedy, as upon the stage of life. Comedy, as Moliere has left it, resembles the pictures of manners drawn by the celebrated La Bruyere. Would any man after him venture to draw them over again, he would expose himself to the fate of those who have ventured to continue them. For instance, what could we add to his character of the Absent Man? Shall we put him in other circumstances? The principal strokes of absence of mind will always be the same; and there are only those striking touches which are fit for a comedy, of which the end is painting after nature, but with

strength and sprightliness, like the designs of Callot. If comedy were among us what it is in Spain, a kind of romance, consisting of many circumstances and intrigues, perplexed and disentangled, so as to surprise; if it was nearly the same with that which Corneille practised in his time; if, like that of Terence, it went no farther than to draw the common portraits of simple nature, and show us fathers, sons, and rivals, notwithstandin hich would always prevail as in the plays bably in those of Menander, whom he i irst pieces, there would always be a reso variety of incidents, like those of the Sp petition of the same characters in the v the case is now very different, the pub racters and nothing else. Multiplicity of laborious contrivance of an intrigue, are to shelter a weak genius that would find s in that way of writing. Nor does it suit the ease of comedy, which requires an air less constrained, and such freedom and ease of manners, as admits nothing of the romantic. She leaves all the pomp of sudden events to the novels, or little romances, which were the diversion of the last age. She allows nothing but a succession of characters resembling nature, and falling in without any apparent contrivance. Racine has likewise taught us to give to tragedy the same simplicity of air and action; he has endeavoured to disentangle it from that great number of incidents, which made it rather a study than diversion to the audience, and which show the poet not so much to abound in invention, as to be deficient in taste. But, notwithstanding all that he has done, or that we can do, to make it simple, it will always have the advantage over comedy in the number of its subjects, because it admits more variety of situations and events, which give variety and novelty to the characters. A miser, copied after nature, will always be the miser of Plautus or Moliere; but a Nero, or a prince like Nero, will not always be the hero of Racine. Comedy admits of so little intrigue, that the miser cannot be shown in any such position as will make his picture new; but the great events of tragedy may put Nero in such circumstances as to make him wholly another character.

But, in the second place, over and above the subjects, may we not say something concerning the final purpose of comedy and tragedy? The purpose of the one is to divert, and the other to move; and of these two, which is the easier? To go to the bottom of those purposes; to move is to strike those strings of the heart which are most natural, terror and pity;

to divert is to make one laugh, a thing which indeed is natural enough, but more delicate. The gentleman and the rustic have both sensibility and tenderness of heart, perhaps in greater or less degree; but as they are men alike, the heart is moved by the same touches. They both love likewise to send their thoughts abroad, and to expand themselves in merriment; but the springs which must be touched for this purpose, are not the same in the gentleman as in the rustic. The passions depend on nature, and merriment upon education. The clown will laugh at a waggery, and the gentleman only at a stroke of delicate conceit. The spectators of a tragedy, if they have but a little knowledge, are almost all on a level; but with respect to comedy, we have three classes, if not more, the people, the learned, and the court. If there are certain cases in which all may be comprehended in the term people, this is not one of those cases. Whatever father Rapin may say about it, we are more willing even to admire than to laugh. Every man that has any power of distinction, laughs as rarely as the philosopher admires; for we are not to reckon those fits of laughter which are not incited by nature, and which are given merely to complaisance, to respect flattery, and good humour; such as break out at sayings which pretend to smartness in assemblies. The laughter of the theatre is of another stamp. Every reader and spectator judges of wit by his own standard, and measures it by his capacity, or by his condition; the different capacities and conditions of men make them diverted on very different occasions. If, therefore, we consider the end of the tragic and comic poet, the comedian must be involved in much more difficulties, without taking in the obstructions to be encountered equally by both, in an art, which consists in raising the passions, or the mirth of a great multitude. The tragedian has little to do but to reflect upon his own thought, and draw from his heart those sentiments which will certainly make their way to the hearts of others, if he found them in his own.—The other must take many forms, and change himself almost into as many persons, as he undertakes to satisfy and divert.

It may be said, that if genius be supposed equal, and success supposed to depend upon genius, the business will be equally easy and difficult to one author and to the other.—This objection is of no weight; for the same question still recurs, which is, whether of these two kinds of genius is more valuable or more rare. If we proceed by example, and not by reasoning, we shall decide I think in favour of comedy.

It may be said, that, if merely art be considered, it will require deeper thoughts to form a plan just and simple; to

produce happy surprises without apparent contrivance; to carry a passion skilfully through its gradations to its height; to arrive happily to the end by always moving from it, as Ithaca seemed to fly Ulysses; to unite the acts and scenes; and to raise by insensible degrees a striking edifice, of which the least merit [illegible] proportion. It may be added, that in [illegible] finitely less, for there the characters cou[illegible] ith very little artifice or plot; the whole [illegible] ted that we see it at once, and the plan an[illegible] parts make a small part of its excellenc[illegible] a gloss of pleasantry diffused over eac[illegible] re the happy effect of a lucky moment, [illegible] eration.

These objecti[illegible] rs, which so fruitful a subject might easil[illegible] difficult to refute; and if we were to judge by the impression made on the mind by tragedies and comedies of equal excellence, perhaps, when we examine those impressions, it will be found that a sally of pleasantry, which diverts all the world, required more thought than a passage which gave the highest pleasure in tragedy; and to this determination we shall be more inclined when a closer examination shall show us, that a happy vein of tragedy is opened and effused at less expense, than a well placed witticism in comedy has required merely to assign its place.

It would be too much to dwell long upon such a digression; and as I have no business to decide the question, I leave both that and my arguments to the taste of each particular reader, who will find what is to be said for or against it. My purpose was only to say of comedy, considered as a work of genius, all that a man of letters can be supposed to deliver without departing from his character, and without palliating in any degree the corrupt use which has been almost always made of an exhibition which in its nature might be innocent; but has been vitious from the time that it has been infected with the wickedness of men. It is not for public exhibitions that I am now writing, but for literary inquiries. The stage is too much frequented, and books too much neglected. Yet it is to the literature of Greece and Rome, that we are indebted for that valuable taste, which will be insensibly lost by the affected negligence which now prevails of having recourse to originals. If reason has been a considerable gainer, it must be confessed that taste has been somewhat a loser.

To return to Aristophanes. So many great men of antiquity, through a long succession of ages, down to our times, have set a value upon his works, that we cannot naturally sup-

pose them contemptible, notwithstanding the essential faults with which he may be justly reproached. It is sufficient to say, that he was esteemed by Plato and Cicero; and to conclude by that which does him most honour, but still falls short of justification, the strong and sprightly eloquence of St. Chrysostom drew its support from the masculine and vigorous atticism of this sarcastic comedian, to whom the father paid the same regard as Alexander to Homer, that of putting his works under his pillow, that he might read them at night before he slept, and in the morning as soon as he awaked.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

BRU THEATRE.

Summary of the four articles treated of in this discourse.

I. THUS I have given a faithful extract of the remains of Aristophanes. That I have not shown them in their true form, I am not afraid that any body will complain. I have given an account of every thing as far as it was consistent with moral decency. No pen, however cynical or heathenish, would venture to produce in open day the horrid passages which I have put out of sight,; and instead of regretting any part that I have suppressed, the very suppression will easily show to what degree the Athenians were infected with licentiousness of imagination and corruption of principles. If the taste of antiquity allows us to preserve what time and barbarity have hitherto spared, religion and virtue at least oblige us not to spread it before the eyes of mankind. To end this work in an useful manner, let us examine in a few words the four particulars which are most striking in the eleven pieces of Aristophanes.

Character of ancient comedy.

II. The first is the character of the ancient comedy, which has no likeness to any thing in nature. Its genius is so wild and strange, that it scarce admits definition. In what class of comedy must we place it? It appears to me a species of writing by itself. If we had Phrynicius, Plato, Eupolis, Critinus Ameipsias, aud so many other celebrated rivals of Aristophanes, of whom all that we can find are a few fragments scattered in Plutarch, Athenias, and Suidas, we might compare them with our poet, settle the general scheme, observe the minuter differences, and form a complete notion of their comic stage. But for want of all this we can fix only on Aristophanes, and it is true that he may

be in some measure sufficient to furnish a tolerable judgment of the old comedy; for if we believe him, and who can be better credited? he was the most daring of all his brethren the poets, who practised the same kind of writing. Upon this supposition we may conclude, that the comedy of those days, consisted in an allegory drawn out and continued; an allegory never very regular, but often ingenious, and almost always carried beyond strict propriety, of satire keen and biting, but diversified, sprightly and unexpected; so that the wound was given before it was perceived. Their points of satire were thunderbolts, and their wild figures, with their variety and quickness, had the effect of lightning. Their imitation was carried even to resemblance of persons, and their common entertainments was a parody of rival poets joined, if I may so express it, with a parody of manners and habits.

But it would be tedious to draw out to the reader that which he will already have perceived better than myself. I have no design to anticipate his reflections; and therefore shall only sketch the picture, which he must finish by himself; he will pursue the subject farther, and form to himself a view of the common and domestic life of the Athenians, of which this kind of comedy was a picture, with some aggravation of the features; he will bring within his view all the customs, manners, and vices, and the whole character of the people of Athens. By bringing all these together he will fix in his mind an indelible idea of a people in whom so many contrarieties were united, and who, in a manner that can scarce be expressed, connected nobility with the cast of Athens, wisdom with madness, rage for novelty with a bigotry for antiquity, the politeness of a monarchy with the roughness of a republic, refinement with coarseness, independence with slavery, haughtiness with servile compliance, severity of manners with debauchery, a kind of irreligion with piety. We shall do this in reading; as in travelling through different nations we make ourselves masters of their characters by combining their different appearances, and reflecting upon what we see.

The government of the Athenians.

III. The government of Athens makes a fine part of the ancient comedy. In most states the mystery of government is confined within the walls of the cabinets; even in commonwealths, it does not pass but through five or six heads, who rule those that think themselves the rulers. Oratory dares not touch it, and comedy still less. Cicero himself did not speak freely upon so nice a subject as the Roman commonwealth; but the Athenian eloquence was informed of the whole secret, and searches the

recesses of the human mind, to fetch it out and expose it to the people. Demosthenes and his contemporaries, speak with a freedom at which we are astonished, notwithstanding the notion we have of a popular government, yet at what time but this did comedy adventure to claim the same rights with civil eloquence? The Italian comedy of the last age, all daring as it was, could for its boldness come into no competitio . It was limited to general satire, which was d so far, that the malignity was overlook to the wild exaggeration, the unexpected st nt wit, and the malignity concealed under s as became the character of Harlequin. But resembled Aristophanes, our age is yet at from his, and the Italian comedy from his h respect to the liberty of censuring the gov an be no comparison made of one age or com . Aristophanes is the only writer of his kind, and is for that reason of the highest value. A powerful state set at the head of Greece, is the subject of his merriment, and that merriment is allowed by the state itself. This appears to us an inconsistency; but it is true that it was the interest of the state to allow it, though not always without inconveniency. It was a restraint upon the ambition and tyranny of single men, a matter of great importance to a people so very jealous of their liberty. Cleon, Alcibiades, Lamachus, and many other generals and magistrates, were kept under by fear of the comic strokes of a poet so little cautious as Aristophanes. He was once indeed in danger of paying dear for his wit. He professed, as he tells us himself, to be of great use by his writings to the state; and rated his merit so high as to complain that he was not rewarded. But under pretence of this public spirit, he spared no part of the public conduct, neither was government, councils, revenues, popular assemblies, secret proceedings in judicature, choice of ministers, the government of the nobles, or that of the people spared.

The Archarnians, the Peace, and the Birds, are eternal monuments of the boldness of the poet, who was not afraid of censuring the government for the obstinate continuance of a ruinous war, for undertaking new ones, and feeding itself with wild imaginations, and running to destruction as it did for an idle point of honour.

Nothing can be more reproachful to the Athenians than his play of the "Knights," where he represents, under an allegory that may be easily seen through, the nation of the Athenians as an old doating fellow, tricked by a new man, such

as Cleon and his companions, who were of the same stamp.

A single glance upon "Lysistrat," and the "Female Orators," must raise astonishment when the Athenian policy is set below the schemes of women, whom the author makes ridiculous for no other reason than to bring contempt upon their husbands, who held the helm of government.

The "Wasps" is written to expose the madness of people for lawsuits and litigations, and a multitude of iniquities are laid open.

It may easily be gathered, that notwithstanding the wise laws of Solon, which they still professed to follow, the government was falling into decay, for we are not to understand the jest of Aristophanes in the literal sense. It is plain that the corruption, though we should suppose it but half as much as we are told, was very great, for it ended in the destruction of Athens, which could scarce raise its head again, after it had been taken by Lysander. Though we consider Aristophanes as a comic writer, who deals in exaggeration, and bring down his stories to their true standard, we still find that the fundamentals of their government fail in almost all the essential points. That the people were inveigled by men of ambition; that all councils and decrees had their original in factious combinations; that avarice and private interest animated all their policy to the hurt of the public; that their revenues were ill managed, their allies improperly treated; that their good citizens were sacrificed, and the bad put in places; that a mad eagerness for judicial litigation took up all their attention within, and that war was made without, not so much with wisdom and precaution, as with temerity and good luck; that the love of novelty and fashion in the manner of managing the public affairs, was a madness universally prevalent; and that Melanthius says in Plutarch, the republic of Athens was continued only by the perpetual discord of those that managed its affairs. This remedied the dishonour by preserving the equilibrium, and was kept always in action by eloquence and comedy.

This is what in general may be drawn from the reading Aristophanes. The sagacity of the readers will go farther; they will compare the different forms of government by which that tumultuous people endeavoured to regulate or increase the democracy, which forms were all fatal to the state, because they were not built upon lasting foundations, and had all in them the principles of destruction. A strange contrivance it was to perpetuate a state, by changing the just proportion which Solon had wisely settled between the nobles and the people; and by opening a gate to the skilful ambi-

tion of those who had art or courage enough to force themselves into the government by means of the people, whom they flattered with protections, that they might more certainly crush them.

The tragic poets rallied.

IV. Another part of the works of Aristophanes are his pleasant reflections upon the most celebrated poets; the shafts which he lets fly at the three heros of tragedy, and [illegible] Euripides, might incline the reader to belie[illegible] tle esteem for those great men; and that [illegible] tators that applauded him were of his opi[illegible] sion would not be just, as I have already [illegible] nents, which, if I had not offered them, the [illegible] ve discovered better than I. But that I may [illegible] or objections, and prevent any shadow of [illegible] all venture to observe, that posterity will n[illegible] ne as less a master of the French stage, be[illegible] were ridiculed by parodies. Parody always fixes on [illegible] pieces, and was more to the taste of the Greeks than to ours. At present the high theatres give it up to stages of inferior rank; but in Athens the comic theatre considered parody as its principal ornament, for a reason which is worth examining. The ancient comedy was not like ours, a remote and delicate imitation; it was the art of gross mimicry, and would have been supposed to have missed its aim, had it not copied the mien, the walk, the dress, the motions of the face of those whom it exhibited. Now parody is an imitation of this kind; it is a change of serious to burlesque, by a slight variation of words, inflexion of voice, or an imperceptible art of mimicry. Parody is to poetry as a mask to a face. As the tragedies of Eschylus, of Sophocles, and of Euripides, were much in fashion, and were known by memory to the people, the parodies upon them would naturally strike and please, when they were accompanied by the grimaces of a good comedian, who mimicked with archness a serious character. Such is the malignity of human nature; we love to laugh at those whom we esteem most, and by this make ourselves some recompense for the unwilling homage which we pay to merit. The parodies upon these poets made by Aristophanes, ought to be considered rather as encomiums than satires. They give us occasion to examine whether the criticisms are just or not in themselves; but what is more important, they afford no proof that Euripides, or his predecessors, wanted the esteem of Aristophanes, or his age. The statues raised to their honour, the respect paid by the Athenians to their writings, and the careful preservation of those writings them-

selves, are immortal testimonies in their favour, and make it unnecessary for me to stop any longer upon so plausible a solution of so frivolous an objection.

Frequent ridicule of the gods.

V. The most troublesome difficulty, and that which, so far as I know, has not yet been cleared to satisfaction, is the contemptuous manner in which Aristophanes treats the gods. Though I am persuaded in my own mind that I have found the true solution of this question, I am not sure that it will make more impression than that of M. Bovin, who contents himself with saying, that every thing was allowed to the comic poets; and that even Atheism was permitted to the licentiousness of the stage; that the Athenians applauded all that made them laugh; and believed that Jupiter himself laughed with them at the smart sayings of a poet. Mr. Collier, an Englishman, in his remarks upon their stage, attempts to prove that Aristophanes was an open atheist. For my part I am not satisfied with the account either of one or the other, and think it better to venture a new system, of which I have already dropt some hints in this work. The truth is that the Athenians professed to be great laughers; always ready for merriment on whatever subject. But it cannot be conceived that Aristophanes should, without punishment, publish himself an atheist, unless we suppose that atheism was the opinion likewise of the spectators, and of the judges commissioned to examine the plays; and yet this cannot be suspected of those who boasted themselves the most religious nation, and naturally the most superstitious of all Greece. How can we suppose those to be atheists, who passed sentence upon Diagoras, Socrates, and Alcibiades, for impiety? These are glaring inconsistencies. To say like M. Bovin, for sake of getting clear of the difficulty, that Alcibiades, Socrates, and Diagoras, attacked religion seriously, and were therefore not allowed, but that Aristophanes did it in jest, or was authorized by custom, would be to trifle with the difficulty, and not to clear it. Though the Athenians loved merriment, it is not likely that if Aristophanes had professed atheism, they would have spared him more than Socrates, who had as much life and pleasantry in his discourses, as the poet in his comedies. The pungent raillery of Aristophanes, and the fondness of the Athenians for it, are therefore not the true reason why the poet was spared when Socrates was condemned. I shall now solve the question with great brevity.

The true answer to this question, is given by Plutarch in his treatise of reading of the poets. Plutarch attempts to

prove that youth is not to be prohibited the reading of the poets; but to be cautioned against such parts as may have bad effects. They are first to be prepossessed with this leading principle, that poetry is false and fabulous. He then enumerates at length the fables which Homer and other poets have invented about their deities; and concludes thus; "When therefore there is found in poetical compositions any thing strange ar[illegible] spect to gods or demigods, or concerning [illegible] excellent and renowned characters, he th[illegible] ese fictions as truth would be corrupted by [illegible] ion; but he that always keeps in his min[illegible] usions, which it is the business of poetry t[illegible] t be injured by these stories, nor receive [illegible] s upon his thoughts, but will be ready t[illegible] if at any time he happens to be afraid, lest [illegible] ge should split the earth, and lay open the [illegible] Some pages afterwards, he tells us, "That religion is a thing difficult of comprehension, and above the understanding of poets; which it is," says he, "necessary to have in mind when we read their fables."

The pagans therefore had their fables which they distinguished from their religion; for no one can be persuaded that Ovid intended his Metamorphoses as a true representation of the religion of the Romans. The poets were allowed their imaginations about their gods, as things which have no regard to the public worship. Upon this principle, I say, as I said before, there was amongst the pagans two sorts of religion; one a poetical, and a real religion; one practical, the other theatrical; a mythology for the poets, a theology for use. They had fables, and a worship which though founded upon fable, was yet very different.

Diagoras, Socrates, Plato, and the philosophers of Athens, with Cicero, their admirer, and the other pretended wise men of Rome, are men by themselves. These were the atheists with respect to the ancients. We must not therefore look into Plato, or into Cicero, for the real religion of the pagans, as distinct from the fabulous. These two authors involve themselves in the clouds, that their opinions may not be discovered. They durst not openly attack the real religion; but destroyed it by attacking fable.

To distinguish here with exactness the agreement or difference between fable and religion, is not at present my intention; it is not easy* to show with exactness what was the

* *See St.* Paul upon the subject of the Ignoto Deo.

Athenian notion of the nature of the gods whom they worshipped. Plutarch himself tells us, that this was a thing very difficult for the philosophers. It is sufficient for me that the mythology and theology of the ancients were different at the bottom; that the names of the gods continued the same; and that long custom gave up one to the caprices of the poets, without supposing the other affected by them. This being once settled upon the authority of the ancients themselves, I am no longer surprised to see Jupiter, Minerva, Neptune, Bacchus, appear upon the stage in the comedy of Aristophanes; and at the same time receiving incense in the temples of Athens. This is, in my opinion, the most reasonable account of a thing so obscure; and I am ready to give up my system to any other, by which the Athenians shall be made more consistent with themselves; those Athenians who sat laughing at the gods of Aristophanes, while they condemned Socrates for having appeared to despise the gods of his country.

The Mimi and Pantomimes.

VI. A word is now to be spoken of the Mimi, which had some relation to comedy. This appellation was by the Greeks and Romans, given to certain dramatic performances, and to the actors that played them. The denomination sufficiently shows, that their art consisted in imitation and buffoonery. Of their works, nothing, or very little, is remaining; so that they can only be considered by the help of some passages in authors; from which little is to be learned that deserves consideration. I shall extract the substance, as I did with respect to the chorus, without losing time, by defining all the different species, or producing all the quotations, which would give the reader more trouble than instruction. He that desires fuller instructions may read Vossius, Valois, Saumaises, and Gataker, of whose compilations, however learned, I should think it shame to be the author.

The Mimi had their original from comedy, of which at its first appearance they made a part; for their mimic actors always played and exhibited grotesque dances in the comedies. The jealousy of rivalship afterwards broke them off from the comic actors, and made them a company by themselves. But to secure their reception, they borrowed from comedy all its drollery, wildness, grossness, and licentiousness. This amusement they added to their dances, and they produced what are now called farces or burlettas. These farces had not the regularity or delicacy of comedies; they were only a succession of single scenes contrived to raise laughter; formed or unravelled without order and without connection. They

had no other end but to make the people laugh. Now and then there might be good sentences, like the sentences of P. Syrus, that are yet left us, but the ground-work was low comedy; and any thing of greater dignity drops in by chance. We must however imagine, that this odd species of the drama rose at length to somewhat a higher character, since we are told that Plato, the philosopher, laid the Mimi of Sophron under his pillow, [illegible] and there after his death. But in general w[illegible] ruth, that it always discovered the meann[illegible] like a false pretension to nobility, in whic[illegible] ys discovered through the concealment of f[illegible].

These Mimi w[illegible], of which the length was different, but the [illegible]e. The Mimi of one species was short; t[illegible] ong, and not quite so grotesque. These t[illegible] divided into many species, distinguished by [illegible] characters, such as show drunkards, physicians, men and women.

Thus far of the Greeks. The Romans having borrowed of them the more noble shows of tragedy and comedy, were not content till they had their rhapsodies. They had their *planipedes*, who played with flat soles, that they might have the more agility; and their Sannions, whose head was shaved that they might box the better. There is no need of naming here all who had a name for these diversions among the Greeks and Romans. I have said enough, and perhaps too much of this abortion of comedy, which drew upon itself the contempt of good men, the censures of the magistrates, and the indignation of the fathers of the church.*

Another set of players were called Pantomimes; these were at least so far preferable to the former, that they gave no offence to the ears. They spoke only to the eyes; but with such art of expression, that without the utterance of a single word, they represented, as we are told, a complete tragedy or comedy in the same manner as dumb Harlequin is exhibited on our theatres. These Pantomimes among the Greeks first mingled singing with their dances; afterwards, about the time of Livius Andronicus, the songs were performed by one part, and the dances by another. Afterwards, in the time of Augustus, when they were sent for to Rome, for the diversions of the people, whom he had enslaved, they played comedies without songs or vocal utterance; but by the sprightliness,

* It is the licentiousness of the Mimi and Pantomimes, against which the censure of the Holy Fathers particularly breaks out, as against a thing irregular and indecent, without supposing it much connected with the cause of religion.

activity, and efficacy of their gestures; or, as Sidonius Apollinaris expresses it, *clausis faucibus, et loquente gestu*, they not only exhibited things and passions, but even the most delicate distinctions of passions, and the slightest circumstances of facts. We must not however imagine, at least in my opinion, that the Pantomimes did literally represent regular tragedies or comedies by the mere motions of their bodies. We may justly determine, notwithstanding all their agility, their representations would at last be very incomplete; yet we may suppose, with good reason, that their action was very lively; and that the art of imitation went great lengths, since it raised the admiration of the wisest men, and made the people mad with eagerness. Yet when we read that one Hylus, the pupil of one Pylades, in the time of Augustus, divided the applauses of the people with his master, when they represented Oedipus, or when Juvenal tells us, that Bathillus played Leda, and other things of the same kind, it is not easy to believe that a single man, without speaking a word, could exhibit tragedies or comedies, and make starts and bounds supply the place of vocal articulation. Notwithstanding the obscurity of this whole matter, one may know what to admit as certain, or how far a representation could be carried by dance, posture, and grimace. Among these artificial dances, of which we know nothing but the names, there was as early as the time of Aristophanes some extremely indecent. These were continued in Italy from the time of Augustus, long after the emperors. It was a public mischief, which contributed in some measure to the decay and ruin of the Roman empire. To have a due detestation of these licentious entertainments, there is no need of any recourse to the fathers: the wiser Pagans tell us very plainly what they thought of them. I have made this mention of the Mimi and Pantomimes, only to show how the most noble of public spectacles were corrupted and abused, and to conduct the reader to the end through every road, and through all the by-paths of human wit, from Homer and Eschylus to our own time.

Wanderings of the human mind in the birth and progress of theatrical representations.

VII. That we may conclude this work by applying the principles laid down at the beginning, and extend it through the whole, I desire the reader to recur to that point where I have represented the human mind as beginning the course of the drama. The chorus was first a hymn to Bacchus, produced by accident; art brought it to perfection, and delight made it public diversion. Thespis made a single actor play before the people; this was the beginning of theatrical shows. Eschylus, taking the idea of the Iliad and Odyssey,

animated, if I may so express it, the epic poem, and gave a dialogue in place of simple recitation, puts the whole into action, and sets it before the eyes, as if it was a present and real transaction; he gives the chorus* and interest in the scenes, contrives habits of dignity and theatrical decorations. In a word, he gives both to tragedy; or more properly, draws it from the bosom of the epic poem. She makes her appearance sparkling [illegible] displayed such majesty as gained every hea[illegible]. Sophocles considers her more nearly with [illegible]tic, and finds that she has something still al[illegible]d swelling; he divests her of her false orna[illegible] a more regular walk, and more familiar di[illegible] was of opinion, that she ought to receive [illegible] and tenderness; he teaches her the new art [illegible]plicity, and gives her the charms of grace[illegible] that he makes her stand in suspense, whe[illegible] most to advantage in the dress of Sophocles sparkling with gems, or in that of Euripides, which is more simple and modest. Both indeed are elegant; but the elegance is of different kinds, between which no judgment as yet has decided the prize of superiority.

We can now trace it no farther; its progress among the Greeks is out of sight. We must pass at once to the time of Augustus, where Apollo and the Muses quitted their ancient residence in Greece, to fix their abode in Italy. But it is vain to ask questions of Melpomene; she is obstinately silent, and we only know from strangers her power amongst the Romans. Seneca endeavours to make her speak; but the gaudy show with which he rather loads than adorns her, makes us think that he took some phantom of Melpomene for the Muse herself.

Another flight, equally rapid with that to Rome, must carry us through thousands of years, from Rome to France. There in the time of Lewis XIV. we see the mind of man giving birth to tragedy a second time, as if the Greek tragedy had been utterly forgot. In the place of Eschylus, we have our Rotrou. In Corneille we have another Sophocles, and in Racine a second Euripides. Thus is tragedy raised from her ashes, carried to the utmost point of greatness, and so dazzling that she prefers herself to herself. Surprised to see herself produced again in France in so short a time, and

* Eschylus, in my opinion, as well as the other poets his contemporaries, retained the chorus, not merely because it was the fashion, but because examining tragedy to the bottom, they found it rational to conceive, that an action great and splendid, like the revolution of a state, could pass without witnesses.

nearly in the same manner as before in Greece, she is disposed to believe, that her fate is to make a short transition from her birth to her perfection, like the goddess that issued from the brain of Jupiter.

If we look back on the other side to the rise of comedy, we shall see it hatched by Margites from the Odyssey of Homer, in imitation of her eldest sister: but we see her under the conduct of Aristophanes become licentious and petulant, taking airs to herself which the magistrates were obliged to crush. Menander reduced her to bounds, taught her at once gaiety and politeness, and enabled her to correct vice, without shocking the offenders. Plautus, among the Romans, to whom we must now pass, united the earlier and the later comedy, and joined buffoonery with delicacy. Terence, who was better instructed, received comedy from Menander, and surpassed his original, as he endeavoured to copy it. And lastly, Moliere produced a new species of comedy, which must be placed in a class by itself, in opposition to that of Aristophanes, whose manner is likewise peculiar to himself.

But such is the weakness of the human mind, that when we review the successions of the drama a third time, we find genius falling from its height, forgetting itself, and led astray by the love of novelty, and the desire of striking out new paths. Tragedy degenerated in Greece from the time of Aristotle, and in Rome after Augustus. At Rome and Athens comedy produced Mimi, pantomimes, burlettas, tricks, and farces, for the sake of variety; such is the character, and such the madness of the mind of man. It is satisfied with having made great conquests, and gives them up to attempt others, which are far from answering its expectation, and only enables it to discover its own folly, weakness, and deviations. But why should we be tired with standing still at the true point of perfection, when it is attained? If eloquence be wearied, and forgets herself a while, yet she soon returns to her former point: so will it happen to our theatres if the French Muses will keep the Greek models in their view, and look with disdain upon a stage whose mother is nature, whose soul is passion, and whose art is simplicity: a stage, which, to speak the truth, does not perhaps equal ours in splendour and elevation, but which excels it in simplicity and propriety, and equals it at least in the conduct and direction of those passions which may properly affect an honest man and a christian.

For my part, I shall think myself well recompensed for my labour, and shall attain the end which I had in view, if I

shall in some little measure revive in the minds of those who purpose to run the round of polite literature, not an immoderate and blind reverence, but a true taste of antiquity: such a taste as both feeds and polishes the mind, and enriches it by enabling it to appropriate the wealth of foreigners, and exert its natural fertility in exquisite productions! such a taste as gave the Racines, the Moliers, the Boileaus, the Fontaines, the Patrus, the F[illegible] ny other great geniuses of the last age, all [illegible] d all that they will always be; such a taste a[illegible] immortality to those works in which it is dis[illegible] so necessary, that without it we may be cer[illegible] test powers of nature will long continue in [illegible] selves; for no man ought to allow himself [illegible] seduced by the example of some men of gen[illegible] er appeared to despise this taste than to des[illegible] It is true that excellent originals have given [illegible] ut any fault of their own, to very bad copies. No man ought severely to ape either the ancients or the moderns; but if it was necessary to run into an extreme of one side or the other, which is never done by a judicious and well directed mind, it would be better for a wit, as for a painter, to enrich himself by what he can take from the ancients, than to grow poor by taking all from his own stock; or openly to affect an imitation of those moderns whose more fertile genius has produced beauties peculiar to themselves, and which themselves only can display with grace; beauties of that peculiar kind, that they are not fit to be imitated by others; though in those who first invented them they may be justly esteemed, and in them only.

DEDICATIONS.

A Complete System of Astronomical Chronology, unfolding the Scriptures. By John Kennedy, Rector of Bradley, in Derbyshire. 4to. 1762.

TO THE KING.

SIR—Having by long labour and diligent inquiry, endeavoured to illustrate and establish the chronology of the bible, I hope to be pardoned the ambition of inscribing my work to your majesty.

An age of war is not often an age of learning; the tumult and anxiety of military preparations seldom leave attention vacant to the silent progress of study, and the placid conquests of investigation; yet, surely, a vindication of the inspired writers can never be unseasonably offered to the DEFENDER OF THE FAITH. nor can it ever be improper to promote that religion without which all other blessings are snares of destruction, without which armies cannot make us safe, nor victories make us happy.

I am far from imagining that my testimony can add any thing to the honours of your majesty, to the splendour of a reign crowned with triumphs, to the beauty of a life dignified by virtue. I can only wish that your reign may long continue such as it has begun, and that the effulgence of your example may spread its light through distant ages, till it shall be the highest praise of any future monarch, that he exhibits some resemblance of George the Third.

I am Sir,
Your majesty's, &c.
JOHN KENNEDY.

LONDON AND WESTMINSTER IMPROVED.

Illustrated by plans. 4to. 1766.

TO THE KING.

SIR—The patronage of works which have a tendency towards advancing the happiness of mankind, naturally belongs

to great princes; and public good, in which public elegance is comprised, has ever been the object of your majesty's regard.

In the following pages your majesty, I flatter myself, will find, that I have endeavoured at extensive and general usefulness. Knowing, therefore, your majesty's early attention to the polite arts, and more particular affection for the study of architecture, I w[illegible] hope that the work which I no[illegible] presume to l[illegible] esty, might be thought not unworthy your r[illegible] that the protection which your majesty alw[illegible] e who mean well, may be extended to,

[illegible] bject,
[illegible] edient
humble servant,
JOHN GWYNN.

ADAMS'S TREATISE ON THE GLOBES. 1767.

TO THE KING.

SIR—It is the privilege of real greatness not to be afraid of diminution by condescending to the notice of little things; and I therefore can boldly solicit the patronage of your majesty to the humble labours by which I have endeavoured to improve the instruments of science, and make the globes on which the earth and sky are delineated less defective in their construction, and less difficult in their use.

Geography is in a peculiar manner the science of princes. When a private student revolves the terraqueous globe, he beholds a succession of countries in which he has no more interest than in the imaginary regions of Jupiter and Saturn. But your majesty must contemplate the scientific picture with other sentiments, and consider, as oceans and continents are rolling before you, how large a part of mankind is now waiting on your determinations, and may receive benefits or suffer evils, as your influence is extended or withdrawn.

The provinces which your majesty's arms have added to your dominions make no inconsiderable part of the orb allotted to human beings. Your power is acknowledged by nations whose names we know not yet how to write, and whose boundaries we cannot yet describe. But your majesty's

lenity and beneficence gives us reason to expect the time, when science shall be advanced by the diffusion of happiness; when the deserts of America shall become pervious and safe; when those who are now restrained by fear shall be attracted by reverence; and multitudes who now range the woods for prey, and live at the mercy of winds and seasons, shall by the paternal care of your majesty, enjoy the plenty of cultivated lands, the pleasures of society, the security of law, and the light of revelation.

I am, sir,
Your majesty's most humble, most obedient,
and most dutiful subject and servant,
GEORGE ADAMS.

BISHOP ZACHARY PEARCE'S POSTHUMOUS WORKS, TWO VOLS. 4TO PUBLISHED BY THE REV. MR. DERBY, 1772.

TO THE KING.

SIR—I presume to lay before your majesty the last labours of a learned bishop, who died in the toils and duties of his calling. He is now beyond the reach of all earthly honours and rewards; and only the hope of inciting others to imitate him, makes it now fit to be remembered, that he enjoyed in his life the favour of your majesty.

The tumultuary life of princes seldom permits them to survey the wide extent of national interest, without losing sight of private merit; to exhibit qualities which may be imitated by the highest and the humblest of mankind; and to be at once amiable and great.

Such characters if now and then they appear in history, are contemplated with admiration. May it be the ambition of all your subjects to make haste with their tribute of reverence; and as posterity may learn from your majesty how kings should live, may they learn, likewise from your people how they should be honoured.

I am,
May it please your majesty,
with the most profound respect,
Your majesty's
most dutiful and devoted
subject and servant.

HOOLE'S TRANSLATION OF TASSO'S JERUSALEM DELIVERED. 1763.

TO THE QUEEN.

MADAM—To approach the high and the illustrious has been in all ages the privilege of poets: and though translations cannot justly claim the same honour, yet they naturally follow their authors [illegible] d I hope that in return for having enabled T[illegible] fame through the British dominions, I [illegible] by him to the presence of your majesty.

Tasso has a [illegible] your majesty's favour, as follower and pa[illegible] se of Este, which has one common ancestor [illegible] Hanover: and in reviewing his life it is [illegible] r a wish that he had lived in a happier time, [illegible] among the descendants of that illustrious fam[illegible] a more liberal and potent patronage.

I cannot but observe, madam, how unequally reward is proportioned to merit, when I reflect that the happiness which was withheld from Tasso is reserved for me: and that the poem which once hardly procured to its author the countenance of the princes of Ferrara, has attracted to its translator the favourable notice of a BRITISH QUEEN.

Had this been the fate of Tasso, he would have been able to have celebrated the condescension of your majesty in nobler language, but could not have felt it with more ardent gratitude, than,

Madam,
Your majesty's
most faithful and devoted servant.

DR. JAMES'S MEDICINAL DICTIONARY, 3 VOLS. FOLIO. 1734.

TO DR. MEAD.

SIR—That the Medicinal Dictionary is dedicated to you, is to be imputed only to your reputation for superior skill in those sciences which I have endeavoured to explain and facilitate; and you are, therefore, to consider this address, if it be agreeable to you, as one of the rewards of merit; and if otherwise, as one of the inconveniences of eminence.

However you shall receive it, my design cannot be disappointed; because this public appeal to your judgment will

show that I do not found my hopes of approbation upon the ignorance of my readers, and that I fear his censure least, whose knowledge is most extensive.

I am, sir,
Your most obedient, humble servant,
R. JAMES.

THE FEMALE QUIXOTE. BY MRS. LENOX. 1752.

TO THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF MIDDLESEX.

My lord—Such is the power of interest over almost every mind, that no one is long without arguments to prove any position which is ardently wished to be true, or to justify any measures which are dictated by inclination.

By this subtile sophistry of desire, I have been persuaded to hope that this book may, without impropriety, be inscribed to your lordship; but am not certain that my reasons will have the same force upon other understandings.

The dread which a writer feels of the public censure; the still greater dread of neglect; and the eager wish for support and protection, which is impressed by the consciousness of imbecility, are unknown to those who have never adventured into the world; and I am afraid, my lord, equally unknown to those who have always found the world ready to applaud them.

'Tis therefore not unlikely that the design of this address may be mistaken, and the effects of my fear imputed to vanity. They who see your lordship's name prefixed to my performance will rather comdemn my presumption than compassionate my anxiety.

But whatever be supposed my motive, the praise of judgment cannot be denied me; for, to whom can timidity so properly fly for shelter, as to him who has been so long distinguished for candour and humanity? How can vanity be so completely gratified as by the allowed patronage of him, whose judgment has so long given a standard to the national taste? Or by what other means could I so powerfully suppress all opposition, but that of envy, as by declaring myself.

My lord,
Your lordship's obliged and
most obedient servant,
THE AUTHOR.

SHAKSPEARE illustrated; or, the NOVELS and HISTORIES on which the plays of SHAKSPEARE are founded; collected and translated from the original authors. With critical remarks. By the author of the FEMALE QUIXOTE. 1758.

TO THE RIGH[illegible], EARL OF ORRERY.

MY LORD,

I HAVE no other pr[illegible] honour of a patronage so illustrious as that of [illegible]hip, than the merit of attempting what has l[illegible]s [illegible]antable neglect been hitherto omitted, though [illegible]cessary to a perfect knowledge of the abilitie[illegible]re.

Among the powers [illegible]nduce to constitute a poet, the first and most valuable is invention; the highest seems to be that which is able to produce a series of events. It is easy when the thread of a story is once drawn, to diversify it with variety of colours; and when a train of action is presented to the mind, a little acquaintance with life will supply circumstances and reflections, and a little knowledge of books furnish parallels and illustrations. To tell over again a story that has been told already, and to tell it better than the first author, is no rare qualification; but to strike out the first hints of a new fable; hence to introduce a set of characters so diversified in their several passions and interests, that from the clashing of this variety may result many necessary incidents; to make these incidents surprising, and yet natural, so as to delight the imagination without shocking the judgment of a reader; and finally to wind up the whole in a pleasing catastrophe, produced by those very means which seem most likely to oppose and prevent it, is the utmost effort of the human mind.

To discover how few of those writers, who profess to recount imaginary adventures, have been able to produce any thing by their own imagination, would require too much of that time which yonr lordship employs in nobler studies. Of all the novels and romances that wit or idleness, vanity or indigence, have pushed into the world, there are very few of which the end cannot be conjectured from the beginning, or where the authors have done more than to transpose the incidents of other tales, or strip the circumstances from one event for the decoration of another.

In the examination of a poet's character, it is therefore first to be inquired what degree of invention has been exerted by him. With this view I have very diligently read the

works of Shakspeare, and now presume to lay the result of my researches before your lordship, before that judge whom Pliny himself would have wished for his assessor to hear a literary cause.

How much the translation of the following novels will add to the reputation of Shakspeare, or take away from it, you, my lord, and men learned and candid like you, if any such can be found, must now determine. Some danger, I am informed there is, lest his admirers should think him injured by this attempt, and clamour as at the diminution of the honour of that nation which boasts itself the parent of so great a poet.

That no such enemies may arise against me, though I am unwilling to believe it, I am far from being too confident, for who can fix bounds to bigotry and folly? My sex, my age, have not given me many opportunities of mingling in the world; there may be in it many a species of absurdity which I have never seen, and among them such vanity as pleases itself with false praise bestowed on another, and such superstition as worship idols, without supposing them to be gods.

But the truth is, that a very small part of the reputation of this mighty genius depends upon the naked plot or story of his plays. He lived in an age when the books of chivalry were yet popular, and when therefore the minds of his auditors were not accustomed to balance probabilities, or to examine nicely the proportion between causes and effects. It was sufficient to recommend a story, that it was far removed from common life, that its changes were frequent, and its close pathetic.

This disposition of the age concurred so happily with the imagination of Shakspeare, that he had no desire to reform it; and indeed to this he was indebted for the licentious variety, by which he made his plays more entertaining than those of any other author.

He had looked with great attention on the scenes of nature; but his chief skill was in human actions, passions and habits; he was therefore delighted with such tales as afforded numerous incidents, and exhibited many characters in many changes of situation. The characters are so copiously diversified, and some of them so justly pursued, that his works may be considered as a map of life, a faithful miniature of human transactions; and he that has read Shakspeare with attention will perhaps find little new in the crowded world.

Among his other excellences it ought to be remarked, because it has hitherto been unnoticed, that his heroes are men,

that the love and hatred, the hopes and fears of his chief personages are such as are common to other human beings, and not like those which later times have exhibited, peculiar to phantoms that strut upon the stage.

It is not perhaps very necessary to inquire whether the vehicle of so much delight and instruction be a story probable or unlikely, native or foreign. Shakspeare's excellence is not the fiction of a [illegible] the representation of life; and his reputation is [illegible] safe, till human nature shall be changed. Nor can he, who has so many just claims to praise, suffer by losing that which ignorant admiration has unreasonably given him. To calumniate the dead is baseness, and to flatter them is surely folly.

From flattery, my lord, either of the dead or the living, I wish to be clear, and have therefore solicited the countenance of a patron, whom, if I knew how to praise him, I could praise with truth, and have the world on my side; whose candour and humanity are universally acknowledged, and whose judgment perhaps was then first to be doubted, when he condescended to admit this address from,

My lord,
Your lordship's most obliged
and most obedient humble servant,
THE AUTHOR.

PAYNE'S INTRODUCTION TO THE GAME OF DRAUGHTS. 1756.

TO THE RIGHT HON. WILLIAM HENRY, EARL OF ROCHFORD, &c.

My Lord—When I take the liberty of addressing to your lordship, A Treatise on the Game of Draughts, I easily foresee that I shall be in danger of suffering ridicule on one part, while I am gaining honour on the other, and that many who may envy me the distinction of approaching you, will deride the present I presume to offer.

Had I considered this little volume as having no purpose beyond that of teaching a game, I should indeed have left it to take its fate without a patron. Triflers may find or make any thing a trifle; but since it is the great characteristic of a wise man to see events in their causes, to obviate consequences, and ascertain contingences, your lordship will think nothing a trifle by which the mind is inured to caution, foresight, and circumspection. The same skill, and often the

same degree of skill, is exerted in great and little things, and your lordship may sometimes exercise, on a harmless game, those abilities which have been so happily employed in the service of your country,

I am, my lord,
Your lordship's most obliged, most obedient,
and most humble servant,
WILLIAM PAYNE.

THE EVANGELICAL HISTORY OF JESUS CHRIST HARMONIZED, EXPLAINED, AND ILLUSTRATED. 2 VOLS. 8VO. 1758.

TO THE LORDS SPIRITUAL AND TEMPORAL, AND COMMONS IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED.

THAT we are fallen upon an age in which corruption is barely not universal, is universally confessed. Venality sculks no longer in the dark, but snatches the bribe in public; and prostitution issues forth without shame, glittering with the ornaments of successful wickedness. Rapine preys on the public without opposition, and perjury betrays it without inquiry. Irreligion is not only avowed but boasted; and the pestilence that used to walk in darkness, is now destroying at noon day.

Shall this be the state of the English nation, and shall her lawgivers behold it without regard? Must the torrent continue to roll on till it shall sweep us into the gulf of perdition? Surely there will come a time when the careless shall be frighted, and the sluggish shall be roused; when every passion shall be put upon the guard by the dread of general depravity; when he who laughs at wickedness in his companion, shall start from it in his child; when the man who fears not for his soul, shall tremble for his possessions; when it shall be discovered that religion only can secure the rich from robbery, and the poor from oppression; can defend the state from treachery, and the throne from assassination.

If this time be ever to come, let it come quickly; a few years longer, and perhaps all endeavours will be vain. We may be swallowed by an earthquake, we may be delivered to our enemies, or abandoned to that discord which must inevitably prevail among men that have lost all sense of divine superintendence, and have no higher motive of action or forbearance, than present opinion of present interest.

It is the duty of private men to supplicate and propose; it

is yours to hear and to do right. Let religion be once more restored, and the nation shall once more be great and happy. This consequence is not far distant; that nation must always be powerful where every man performs his duty; and every man will perform his duty that considers himself as a being whose condition is to be settled to all eternity by the laws of Christ.

The only doct[illegible]an can be made *wise unto salvation*, is the [illegible]aled in the books of the old and new Testamen[illegible].

To study the s[illegible]ore, according to his abilities and attainm[illegible]n's duty, and to facilitate that study to the [illegible]ath made weak, or education has left ign[illegible]sable cares detain from regular processes [illegible]usiness of those who have been blessed with [illegible]arning, and are appointed the instructors of the lower classes of men, by that common father, who distributes to all created beings their qualifications and employments; who has allotted some to the labour of the hand, and some to the exercise of the mind; has commanded some to teach, and others to learn; has prescribed to some the patience of instruction, and to others the meekness of obedience.

By what methods the unenlightened and ignorant may be made proper readers of the word of God, has been long and diligently considered. Commentaries of all kinds have indeed been copiously produced; but there still remain multitudes to whom the labours of the learned are of little use, for whom expositions require an expositor. To those, indeed, who read the divine books without vain curiosity, or a desire to be wise beyond their powers, it will always be easy to discern the straight path, to find the words of everlasting life. But such is the condition of our nature, that we are always attempting what is difficult to perform; he who reads the scripture to gain goodness, is desirous likewise to gain knowledge, and by his impatience of ignorance, falls into error.

This danger has appeared to the doctors of the Romish church, so much to be feared, and so difficult to be escaped, that they have snatched the Bible out of the hands of the people, and confined the liberty of perusing it to those whom literature has previously qualified. By this expedient they have formed a kind of uniformity, I am afraid too much like that of colours in the dark; but they have certainly usurped a power which God has never given them, and precluded great numbers from the highest spiritual consolation.

I know not whether this prohibition has not brought upon them an evil which they themselves have not discovered. It is granted, I believe, by the Romanists themselves, that the best commentaries on the Bible have been the works of Protestants. I know not, indeed, whether since the celebrated paraphrase of Erasmus, any scholar has appeared among them, whose works are much valued, even in his own communion. Why have those who excel in every other kind of knowledge, to whom the world owes much of the increase of light which has shone upon these latter ages, failed, and failed only when they have attempted to explain the scriptures of God? Why, but because they are in the church less read and less examined, because they have another rule of deciding controversies, and instituting laws.

Of the Bible some of the books are prophetical, some doctrinal and historical, as the gospels, of which we have in the subsequent pages attempted an illustration. The books of the evangelists contain an account of the life of our blessed SAVIOUR, more particularly of the years of his ministry, interspersed with his precepts, doctrines, and predictions. Each of these histories contain facts and dictates related likewise in the rest, that the truth might be established by concurrence of testimony; and each has likewise facts and dictates which the rest omit, to prove that they were wrote without communication.

These writers not affecting the exactness of chronologers, and relating various events of the same life, or the same events with various circumstances, have some difficulties to him who, without the help of many books, desires to collect a series of the acts and precepts of Jesus Christ; fully to know his life, whose example was given for our imitation; fully to understand his precepts, which it is sure destruction to disobey.

In this work, therefore, an attempt has been made, by the help of harmonists and expositors, to reduce the four gospels into one series of narration, to form a complete history out of the different narratives of the evangelists by inserting every event in the order of time, and correcting every precept of life and doctrine, with the occasion on which it was delivered; showing as far as history or the knowledge of ancient custom can inform us, the reason and propriety of every action; and explaining, or endeavouring to explain, every precept and declaration in its true meaning.

Let it not be hastily concluded, that we intend to substitute this book for the gospels, or to obtrude our own expositions as the oracles of God. We recommend to the unlearned

reader to consult us when he finds any difficulty, as men who have laboured not to deceive ourselves, and who are without any temptation to deceive him; but, as men, however, that, while they mean best may be mistaken. Let him be careful, therefore, to distinguish what we cite from the gospels, from what we offer as our own; he will find many difficulties removed; and if some yet remain, let him remember that *God is in heaven and we upon earth*, that *our thoughts are not God's tho* [illegible] great cure of doubt is an humble mind.

ANGELL'S STENO[illegible]RTHAND IMPROVED. 1758.

TO THE MOST N[illegible]UKE OF RICHMOND, LEN[illegible]r, &c.

May it please your GRACE,

THE improvement of arts and sciences has always been esteemed laudable; and in proportion to their utility and advantage to mankind, they have generally gained the patronage of persons the most distinguished for birth, learning and reputation in the world. This is an art undoubtedly of public utility, and which has been cultivated by persons of distinguished abilities, as will appear from its history. But as most of their systems have been defective, clogged with a multiplicity of rules, and perplexed by arbitrary, intricate, and impracticable schemes, I have endeavoured to rectify their defects, to adapt it to all capacities, and render it of general, lasting, and extensive benefit. How this is effected, the following plates will sufficiently explain, to which I have prefixed a suitable introduction, and a concise and impartial history of the origin and progressive improvement of this art. And as I have submitted the whole to the inspection of accurate judges, whose approbation I am honoured with, I most humbly crave leave to publish it to the world under your grace's patronage; not merely on account of your great dignity and high rank in life, though these receive a lustre from your grace's humanity, but also from a knowledge of your grace's disposition to encourage every useful art, and favour all true promoters of science. That your grace may long live the friend of learning, the guardian of liberty, and the patron of virtue, and then transmit your

name with the highest honour and esteem to latest posterity, is the ardent wish of

Your grace's most humble, &c.*

BARETTI'S DICTIONARY OF THE ENGLISH AND ITALIAN LANGUAGES. 2 VOLS. 4TO. 1760.

To his Excellency DON FELIX, Marquis of ABREU, and BERTODANO, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary from his Catholic Majesty to the King of Great Britain.

MY LORD,

THAT acuteness of penetration into characters and designs, and that nice discernment of human passions and practices, which have raised you to your present height of station and dignity of employment, have long shown you that dedicatory addresses are written for the sake of the author more frequently than of the patron: and though they profess only reverence and zeal, are commonly dictated by interest or vanity.

I shall therefore, not endeavour to conceal my motives, but confess that the Italian Dictionary is dedicated to your excellency, that I might gratify my vanity, by making it known, that in a country where I am a stranger, I have been able, without any external recommendation, to obtain the notice and countenance of a nobleman so eminent for knowledge and ability, that in his twenty third year he was sent as plenipotentiary to superintend, at Aix la Chapelle, the interests of a nation remarkable above all others for gravity and prudence; and who at an age, when very few are admitted to public trust, transacts the most important affairs between two of the greatest monarchs of the world.

If I could attribute to my own merits the favours which your excellency every day confers upon me, I know not how much my pride might be inflamed; but when I observe the extensive benevolence and boundless liberality by which all who have the honour to approach you, are dismissed more happy than they come, I am afraid of raising my own value, since I dare not ascribe it so much to my power of pleasing as your willingness to be pleased.

Yet as every man is inclined to flatter himself, I am desir-

* This is the dedication mentioned by Dr. Johnson himself in Boswell's Life, vol. ii. 226. I should not else have suspected what has so little of his manner. C.

ous to hope that I am not admitted to greater intimacy than others, without some qualifications for so advantageous a distinction, and shall think it my duty to justify, by constant respect and sincerity, the favours which you have been pleased to show me.

I am, my lord,
Your excellency's most humble
and most obedient servant,
J. BARETTI.

London,
Jan. 12, 1760.

THE ENGLISH WORKS OF ROGER ASCHAM, EDITED BY JAMES BENNET, 4TO. 1767.

To the Right Hon. ANTHONY ASHLEY COOPER, Earl of SHAFTESBURY, Baron ASHLEY, Lord Lieutenant and Custos Rotulorum of DORSETSHIRE, F. R. S.

MY LORD—Having endeavoured, by an elegant and useful edition, to recover the esteem of the public to an author undeservedly neglected, the only care which I now owe to his memory, is that of inscribing his works to a patron whose acknowledged eminence of character may awaken attention and attract regard.

I have not suffered the zeal of an editor so far to take possession of my mind, as that I should obtrude upon your lordship any productions unsuitable to the dignity of your rank or of your sentiments. Ascham was not only the chief ornament of a celebrated college, but visited foreign countries, frequented courts, and lived in familiarity with statesmen and princes; not only instructed scholars in literature, but formed ELIZABETH to empire.

To propagate the works of such a writer will not be unworthy of your lordship's patriotism; for I know not what greater benefits you can confer on your country, than that of preserving worthy names from oblivion, by joining them with your own.

I am, my lord,
Your lordship's most obliged,
most obedient and most humble servant,
JAMES BENNET.

[redacted]

PREFACE

TO

"NEW TABLES OF INTEREST;

DESIGNED TO ANSWER, IN THE MOST CORRECT AND EXPEDITIOUS MANNER, THE COMMON PURPOSES OF BUSINESS, PARTICULARLY THE BUSINESS OF THE PUBLIC FUNDS.

By JOHN PAYNE, of the Bank of England." 1758.

AMONG the writers of fiction, whose business is to furnish that entertainment which fancy perpetually demands, it is a standing plea, that the beauties of nature are now exhausted; that imitation has exerted all its power, and that nothing more can be done for the service of their mistress, than to exhibit a perpetual transposition of known objects, and draw new pictures, not by introducing new images, but by giving new lights and shades, a new arrangement and colouring to the old. This plea has been cheerfully admitted; and fancy, led by the hand of a skilful guide, treads over again the flowery path she has often trod before, as much enamoured with every new diversification of the same prospect, as with the first appearance of it.

In the regions of science, however, there is not the same indulgence; the understanding and the judgment travel there in the pursuit of truth, whom they always expect to find in one simple form, free from the disguises of dress and ornament; and, as they travel with laborious step and a fixed eye, they are content to stop when the shades of night darken the prospect, and patiently wait the radiance of a new morning, to lead them forward in the path they have chosen, which, however thorny, or however steep, is severely preferred to the most pleasing excursions that bring them no nearer to the object of their search. The plea, therefore, that nature

is exhausted, and that nothing is left to gratify the mind, but different combinations of the same ideas, when urged as a reason for multiplying unnecessary labours among the sons of science, is not so readily admitted; the understanding when in possession of truth, is satisfied with the simple acquisition; and not, like fancy, inclined to wander after new pleasures in the diversification of objects already known, which, perhaps may lead to error.

But notwithstanding this general disinclination to accumulate labours for the sake of that pleasure which arises merely from different modes of investigating truth, yet, as the mines of science have been diligently opened, and their treasures widely diffused, there may be parts chosen, which, by a proper combination and arrangement, may contribute not only to entertainment but use, like the rays of the sun, collected in a concave mirror, to serve particular purposes of light and heat.

The power of arithmetical numbers has been tried to a vast extent, and variously applied to the improvement both of business and science. In particular, so many calculations have been made with respect to the value and use of money, that some serve only for speculation and amusement; and there is great opportunity for selecting a few that are peculiarly adapted to common business, and the daily interchanges of property among men. Those which happen in the public funds are, at this time, the most frequent and numerous; and to answer the purposes of that business, in some degree, more perfectly than has hitherto been done, the following tables are published. What that degree of perfection above other tables of the same kind may be, is a matter, not of opinion and taste, in which many might vary, but of accuracy and usefulness, with respect to which most will agree. The approbation they meet with will, therefore, depend upon the experience of those for whom they were principally designed, the proprietors of the public funds, and the brokers who transact the business of the funds, to whose patronage they are cheerfully committed.

Among the brokers of stocks are men of great honour and probity, who are candid and open in all their transactions, and incapable of mean and selfish purposes; and it is to be lamented, that a market of such importance as the present state of this nation has made theirs, should be brought into any discredit by the intrusion of bad men, who instead of serving their country, and procuring an honest subsistence in the army or the fleet, endeavour to maintain luxurious tables, and splendid equipages, by sporting with the public credit.

It is not long since the evil of stock jobbing was risen to such an enormous height, as to threaten great injury to every actual proprietor; particularly to many widows and orphans. who being bound to depend upon the funds for their whole subsistence. could not possibly retreat from the approaching danger. But this evil, after many unsuccessful attempts of the legislature to conquer it, was, like many others, at length subdued by its own violence; and the reputable stock brokers seem now to have it in their power effectually to prevent its return, by not suffering the most distant approaches of it to take footing in their own practice, and by opposing every effort made for its recovery by the desperate sons of fortune, who, not having the courage of highwaymen, take 'Change Alley rather than the road, because though more injurious than highwaymen, they are less in danger of punishment by the loss either of liberty or life.

With respect to the other patrons to whose encouragement these tables have been recommended, the proprietors of the public funds, who are busy in the improvement of their fortunes, it is sufficent to say, that no motive can sanctify the accumulation of wealth, but an ardent desire to make the most honourable and virtuous use of it, by contributing to the support of good government, the increase of arts and industry, the rewards of genius and virtue, and the relief of wretchedness and want.

What Good, what True, what Fit we justly call,
Let this be all our care, for this is All;
To lay this TREASURE up, and hoard with haste,
What *ev'ry day* will want, and most the *last*.
This done, the poorest can no wants endure;
And this not done, the richest must be poor. POPE.

THE

ADVENTURER.*

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Hæc toties optata exegit gloria pœnas. JUV.

Such fate pursues the votaries of praise.

TO THE ADVENTURER.

Fleetprison, Feb. 24.

SIR—To a benevolent disposition, every state of life will afford some opportunities of contributing to the welfare of mankind. Opulence and splendour are enabled to dispel the cloud of adversity, to dry up the tears of the widow and the orphan, and to increase the felicity of all around them; their example will animate virtue, and retard the progress of vice. And even indigence and obscurity, though without power to confer happiness, may at least prevent misery, and apprize those who are blinded by their passions, that they are on the brink of irremediable calamity.

Pleased, therefore, with the thought of recovering others from that folly which has imbittered my own days, I have presumed to address the Adventurer, from the dreary mansions of wretchedness and despair, of which the gates are so wonderfully constructed, as to fly open for the reception of strangers, though they are impervious as a rock of adamant to such as are within them;

* Five of these papers, Nos. 39, 67, 74, 81, and 128, are now restored to this edition of Dr. Johnson's works. They have hitherto been omitted probably owing to Sir John Hawkins having made use of some incorrect copy of the Adventurer from whence he selected what were written by Dr. Johnson. Mr. Boswell's account of this paper is in many respects erroneous. See BRITISH ESSAYISTS, Preface to the Adventurer, p. 30—35.

.....Facilis descensus Averni;
Noctes atque dies patet atri janua Ditis;
Sed revocare gradum, superasque evadere ad auras,
Hoc opus hic labor est. VIRG.

The gates of hell are open night and day;
Smooth the descent, and easy is the way;
But to return and view the cheerful skies;
In this the task and mighty labour lies. DRYDEN.

Suffer me to acquaint you, sir, that I have glittered at the ball, and sparkled in the circle; that I have had the happiness to be the unknown favourite of an unknown lady at the masquerade, have been the delight of tables of the first fashion, and the envy of my brother beaux; and to descend a little lower, it is, I believe, still remembered, that Messrs. Velours and d'Espagne stand indebted for a great part of their present influence at Guildhall, to the elegance of my shape, and the graceful freedom of my carriage.

..... Sed quæ præclara et prospera tanti,
Ut rebus lætis par sit mensura malorum! JUV.

See the wild purchase of the bold and vain,
Where every bliss is bought with equal pain!

As I entered into the world very young, with an elegant person, and a large estate, it was not long before I disentangled myself from the shackles of religion; for I was determined to the pursuit of pleasure, which according to my notions consisted in the unrestrained and unlimited gratifications of every passion and every appetite; and as this could not be obtained under the frowns of a perpetual dictator, I considered religion as my enemy; and proceeding to treat her with contempt and derision, was not a little delighted, that the unfashionableness of her appearance, and the unanimated uniformity of her motions, afforded frequent opportunities for the sallies of my imagination.

Conceiving now that I was sufficiently qualified to laugh away scruples, I imparted my remarks to those among my female favourites, whose virtue I intended to attack; for I was well assured, that pride would be able to make but a weak defence, when religion was subverted; nor was my success below my expectation; the love of pleasure is too strongly implanted in the female breast, to suffer them scrupulously to examine the validity of arguments designed to weaken restraint; all are easily led to believe, that whatever thwarts their inclination must be wrong; little more, therefore, was

required, than by the addition of some circumstances, and the exaggeration of others, to make merriment supply the place of demonstration; nor was I so senseless as to offer arguments to such as could not attend to them, and with whom a repartee or catch would more effectually answer the same purpose. This being effected, there remained only the "dread of the world;" but Roxana soared too high, to think the opinion of others worthy her [illegible] seemed to think of it only to declare, that [illegible] were worlds," she should reckon them "[illegible]" and Pastorella fondly conceived, that [illegible] ever by the side of a bubbling fountain, [illegible] swain and fleecy care; without conside[illegible] and solitude can afford satisfaction only t[illegible]

It is not the [illegible] isitions, but the glory of conquests that fi[illegible] reast, as indeed the town is seldom worth [illegible] suffered the devastations of a siege; so that though I did not openly declare the effects of my own prowess, which is forbidden by the laws of honour, it cannot be supposed that I was very solicitous to bury my reputation, or to hinder accidental discoveries. To have gained one victory, is an inducement to hazard a second engagement; and though the success of the general should be a reason for increasing the strength of the fortification, it becomes, with many, a pretence for an immediate surrender, under the notion that no power is able to withstand so formidable an adversary; while others brave the danger, and think it mean to surrender, and dastardly to fly. Melissa, indeed, knew better; and though she could not boast the apathy, steadiness, and inflexibility of a Cato, wanted not the more prudent virtue of Scipio, and gained the victory by declining the contest.

You must not, however, imagine, that I was, during this abandoned libertinism, so fully convinced of the fitness of my own conduct, as to be free from uneasiness. I knew very well that I might justly be deemed the pest of society, and that such proceedings must terminate in the destruction of my health and fortune; but to admit thoughts of this kind, was to live upon the rack; I fled, therefore to the regions of mirth and jollity, as they are called, and endeavoured with burgundy, and a continual rotation of company, to free myself from the pangs of reflection. From these orgies we frequently sallied forth in quest of adventures, to the no small terror and consternation of all the sober stragglers that came in our way; and though we never injured, like our illustrious progenitors, the Mohocks, either life or limbs; yet we have

in midst of Covent Garden buried a taylor, who had been troublesome to some of our fine gentlemen, beneath a heap of cabbage leaves and stalks, with this conceit,

Satia te caule quem semper cupisti.

Glut yourself with cabbage, of which you have always been greedy.

There can be no reason for mentioning the common exploits of breaking windows and bruising the watch; unless it be to tell you of the device of producing before the justice broken lanthorns, which have been paid for an hundred times; or their appearance with patches on their heads, under pretence of being cut by the sword that was never drawn; nor need I say any thing of the more formidable attack of sturdy chairmen, armed with poles; by a slight stroke of which, the pride of Ned Revel's face was at once laid flat, and that effected in an instant, which its most mortal foe had for years assayed in vain. I shall pass over the accidents that attended the attemps to scale windows and endeavour to dislodge signs from their hooks; there are many "hairbreadth 'scapes," besides those in the "imminen deadly breach:" but the rake's life, though it be equally hazardous with that of the soldier, is neither accompanied with present honour, nor with pleasing retrospect; such is, and such ought to be the difference, between the enemy and the preserver of his country.

Amidst such giddy and thoughtless extravagance, it will not seem strange, that I was often the dupe of coarse flattery. When Mons. L'Allonge assured me that I thrust quart over arm better than any man in England, what could I less than present him with a sword that cost me thirty pieces? I was bound for a hundred pounds for Tom Trippet, because he had declared that he would dance a minuet with any man in the three kingdoms except myself. But I often parted with money against my inclination, either because I wanted the resolution to refuse, or dreaded the appellation of a niggardly fellow; and I may be truly said to have squandered my estate, without honour, without friends, and without pleasure. The last may, perhaps, appear strange to men unacquainted with the masquerade of life; I deceived others, and I endeavoured to deceive myself; and have worn the face of pleasantry and gaiety, while my heart suffered the most exquisite torture.

By the instigation and encouragement of my friends, I became at length ambitious of a seat in parliament; and accordingly set out for the town of Wallop in the west, where

my arrival was welcomed by a thousand throats, and I was in three days sure of a majority; but after drinking out one hundred and fifty hogsheads of wine, and bribing two thirds of the corporation twice over, I had the mortification to find, that the borough had been before sold to Mr. Courtley.

In a life of this kind, my fortune, though considerable, was presently dissipated; and as the attraction grows more strong the nearer any body approaches the earth, when once a man begins to sink into poverty, he falls with velocity always increasing; every supply is purchased at a higher and higher price, and every office of kindness obtained with greater and greater difficulty. Having now acquainted you with my state of elevation, I shall, if you encourage the continuance of my correspondence, show you by what steps I descended from a first floor in Pall Mall to my present habitation.

I am, sir,
Your humble servant,
MYSARGYRUS.

Numb. 39. Tuesday, March 20, 1753.

....Οδυσεος φυλλοισι καλυψατο, τω δ' αρ Αθηνη
Υπνον επ' ομμασι χευ, ἱνα μιν παυσειε ταχιστα
Δυσπονεος καματοιο. Hom.

Pallas pour'd sweet slumbers on his soul;
And balmy dreams, the gift of soft repose,
Calm'd all his pains, and banish'd all his woes. Pope.

If every day did not produce fresh instances of the ingratitude of mankind, we might, perhaps, be at a loss why so liberal a benefactor as Sleep, should meet with so few historians or panegyrists. Writers are so totally absorbed by the business of the day as never to turn their attention to that power, whose officious hand so seasonably suspends the burden of life; and without whose interposition, man would not be able to endure the fatigue of labour, however rewarded, or the struggle with opposition, however successful.

Night, though she divides to many the longest part of life, and to almost all the most innocent and happy, is yet unthankfully neglected, except by those who pervert her gifts.

The astronomers, indeed, expect her with impatience, and felicitate themselves upon her arrival; Fontenelle has not

failed to celebrate her praises; and to chide the sun for hiding from his view the worlds, which he imagines to appear in every constellation. Nor have the poets been always deficient in her praises; Milton has observed of the night, that it is "the pleasant time, the cool, the silent."

These men may, indeed, well be expected to pay particular homage to night; since they are indebted to her, not only for cessation of pain, but increase of pleasure; not only for slumber, but for knowledge. But the greater part of her avowed votaries are the sons of luxury; who appropriate to festivity the hours designed for rest; who consider the reign of pleasure as commencing, when day begins to withdraw her busy multitudes, and ceases to dissipate attention by intrusive and unwelcome variety; who begin to awake to joy when the rest of the world sinks into insensibility; and revel in the soft affluence of flattering and artificial lights, which "more shadowy set off the face of things."

Without touching upon the fatal consequences of a custom, which, as Ramazzini observes, will be for ever condemned, and for ever retained; it may be observed, that however sleep may be put off from time to time, yet the demand is of so importunate a nature, as not to remain long unsatisfied; and if, as some have done, we consider it as the tax of life, we cannot but observe it as a tax that must be paid, unless we could cease to be men; for Alexander declared, that nothing convinced him that he was not a divinity, but his not being able to live without sleep.

To live without sleep in our present fluctuating state, however desirable it might seem to the lady in Clelia, can surely be the wish only of the young or the ignorant; to every one else, a perpetual vigil will appear to be a state of wretchedness, second only to that of the miserable beings, whom Swift has in his travels so elegantly described, as "supremely cursed with immortality."

Sleep is necessary to the happy, to prevent satiety, and to endear life by a short absence; and to the miserable, to relieve them by intervals of quiet. Life is to most, such as could not be endured without frequent intermission of existence; Homer, therefore, has thought it an office worthy of the goddess of wisdom, to lay Ulysses asleep when landed on Phæacia.

It is related of Barretier, whose early advances in literature scarce any human mind has equalled, that he spent twelve hours of the four and twenty in sleep, yet this appears from the bad state of his health, and the shortness of his life, to have been too small a respite for a mind so vigorously and

intensely employed; it is to be regretted, therefore, that he did not exercise his mind less, and his body more; since by this means, it is highly probable, that though he would not then have astonished with the blaze of a comet, he would yet have shown with the permanent radiance of a fixed star.

Nor should it be objected, that there have been many men who daily spend fifteen or sixteen hours in study; for by some of whom this is reported, it has never been done; others have done it for a short time only; and of the rest it appears, that they employed their minds in such operations as required neither celerity nor strength, in the low drudgery of collating copies, comparing authorities, digesting dictionaries, or accumulating compilations.

Men of study and imagination are frequently upbraided by the industrious and plodding sons of care, with passing too great a part of their life in a state of inaction. But these defiers of sleep seem not to remember, that though it must be granted them that they are crawling about before the break of day, it can seldom be said that they are perfectly awake; they exhaust no spirits, and require no repairs; but lie torpid as a toad in marble, or at least are known to live only by an inert and sluggish locomotive faculty, and may be said like a wounded snake, to "drag their slow length along."

Man has been long known among philosophers, by the appellation of the microcosm, or epitome of the world; the resemblance between the great and the little world might, by a rational observer, be detailed to many particulars; and to many more by a fanciful speculatist. I know not in which of these two classes I shall be ranged for observing, that as the total quantity of light and darkness allotted in the course of the year to every region of the earth is the same, though distributed at various times and in different portions: so perhaps, to each individual of the human species, nature has ordained the same quantity of wakefulness and sleep; though divided by some into a total quiescence and vigorous exertion of their faculties, and blended by others in a kind of twilight of existence, in a state between dreaming and reasoning, in which they either think without action, or act without thought.

The poets are generally well affected to sleep; as men who think with vigour, they require respite from thought; and gladly resign themselves to that gentle power, who not only bestows rest, but frequently leads them to happier regions, where patrons are always kind, and audiences are always candid, where they are feasted in the bowers of imagination,

and crowned with flowers divested of their prickles, and laurels of unfading verdure.

The more refined and penetrating part of mankind, who take wide surveys of the wilds of life, who see the innumerable terrors and distresses that are perpetually preying on the heart of man, and discern with unhappy perspicuity, calamities yet latent in their causes, are glad to close their eyes upon the gloomy prospect, and lose in a sort of insensibility the remembrance of other's miseries and their own. The hero has no higher hope, than that, after having routed legions after legions, and added kingdom to kingdom, he shall retire to milder happiness, and close his days in social festivity. The wit or the sage can expect no greater happiness, than that, after having harassed his reason in deep researches, and fatigued his fancy in boundless excursions, he shall sink at night in the tranquillity of sleep.

The poets, among all those that enjoy the blessings of sleep, have been least ashamed to acknowledge their benefactor. How much Statius considered the evils of life as assuaged and softened by the balm of slumber, we may discover by that pathetic invocation, which he poured out in his waking nights; and that Cowley, among the other felicities of his darling solitude, did not forget to number the privilege of sleeping without disturbance, we may learn from the rank that he assigns among the gifts of nature to the poppy, "which is scattered," says he, "over the fields of corn, that all the needs of man may be easily satisfied, and that bread and sleep may be found together.

Si quis invisum Cereri benignæ
Me putat germen, vehementer errat;
Illa me in partem recipit libenter
Fertilis agri.

Meque frumentumque simul per omnes
Consulens mundo Dea spargit oras;
Crescite, O! dixit, duo magna sustentacula vitæ.

Carpe, mortalis, mea dona lætus,
Carpe, nec plantas aliis require,
Sed satur panis, satur et soporis,
Cætera sperne.

He widely errs who thinks I yield
Precedence in the well cloth'd field,
Tho' mix'd with wheat I grow;
Indulgent Ceres knew my worth,
And to adorn the teeming earth,
She bade the Poppy blow.

Nor vainly gay the sight to please,
But blest with power mankind to ease,
The goddess saw me rise;
"Thrive with the life supporting grain,"
She cry'd, "the solace of the swain,
The cordial of his eyes.

"Seize, happy mortal, seize the good;
My hand supplies thy sleep and food,
And makes thee truly blest;
With plenteous meals enjoy the day,
In slumbers pass the night away,
And leave to fate the rest." C. B.

Sleep, therefore, as the chief of all earthly blessings, is justly appropriated to industry and temperance; the refreshing rest, and the peaceful night, are the portion only of him who lies down weary with honest labour, and free from the fumes of indigested luxury; it is the just doom of laziness and gluttony, to be inactive without ease, and drowsy without tranquillity.

Sleep has been often mentioned as the image of death; "so like it," says sir Thomas Brown, "that I dare not trust it without my prayers;" their resemblance is, indeed apparent and striking; they both, when they seize the body, leave the soul at liberty; and wise is he that remembers of both, that they can be safe and happy only by virtue.

Numb. 41. Tuesday, March 27, 1753.

——————Si mutabile pectus
Est tibi, consiliis, non curribus, utere nostris,
Dum potes, et solidis etiamnum sedibus adstas;
Dumque male optatos nondum premis inscius axes. Ovid.

——————Th' attempt forsake,
And not my chariot but my counsel take;
While yet securely on the earth you stand;
Nor touch the horses with too rash a hand. Addison.

TO THE ADVENTURER.

Fleet, March 24.

Sir—I now send you the sequel of my story; which had not been so long delayed, if I could have brought myself to imagine, that any real impatience was felt for the fate of Mysargyrus; who has travelled no unbeaten tract to misery, and consequently can present the reader only with such incidents as occur in daily life.

You have seen me, sir, in the zenith of my glory; not dispensing the kindly warmth of an all cheering sun; but like another Phaëton, scorching and blasting every thing around me. I shall proceed, therefore, to finish my career, and pass as rapidly as possible through the remaining vicissitudes of my life.

When I first began to be in want of money, I made no doubt of an immediate supply. The newspapers were perpetually offering directions to men who seemed to have no other business than to gather heaps of gold for those who place their supreme felicity in scattering it. I posted away, therefore, to one of these advertisers, who by his proposals seemed to deal in thousands; and was not a little chagrined to find, that this general benefactor would have nothing to do with any larger sum than thirty pounds, nor would venture that without a joint note from myself and a reputable housekeeper, or for a longer time than three months.

It was not yet so bad with me, as that I needed to solicit surety for thirty pounds; yet partly from the greediness that extravagance always produces, and partly from a desire of seeing the humour of a petty usurer, a character of which I had hitherto lived in ignorance, I condescended to listen to his terms. He proceeded to inform me of my great felicity in not falling into the hands of an extortioner; and assured me, that I should find him extremely moderate in his demands; he was not, indeed, certain, that he could furnish me with the whole sum, for people were at this particular time extremely pressing and importunate for money; yet as I had the appearance of a gentleman, he would try what he could do, and give me his answer in three days.

At the expiration of the time, I called upon him again; and was again informed of the great demand for money, and that, "money was money now;" he then advised me to be punctual in my payment, as that might induce him to befriend me hereafter; and delivered me the money, deducting at the rate of five-and-thirty *per cent.* with another panegyric upon his own moderation.

I will not tire you with the various practices of usurious oppression; but cannot omit my transaction with Squeeze on Towerhill, who finding me a young man of considerable expectations, employed an agent to persuade me to borrow five hundred pounds, to be refunded by an annual payment of twenty *per cent.* during the joint lives of his daughter Nancy Squeeze and myself. The negotiator came prepared to enforce his proposal with all his art; but finding that I caught his offer with the eagerness of necessity, he grew cold and

languid; "he had mentioned it out of kindness; he would try to serve me; Mr. Squeeze was an honest man, but extremely cautious." In three days he came to tell me, that his endeavours had been ineffectual, Mr. Squeeze having no good opinion of my life; but that there was one expedient remaining; Mrs. Squeeze could influence her husband, and her good will might be gained by a compliment. I waited that afternoon on Mrs. Squeeze, and poured out before her the flatteries which usually gain access to rank and beauty; I did not then know, that there are places in which the only compliment is a bribe. Having yet credit with a jeweller, I afterwards procured a ring of thirty guineas, which I humbly presented, and was soon admitted to a treaty with Mr. Squeeze. He appeared peevish and backward, and my old friend whispered me, that he would never make a dry bargain; I, therefore, invited him to a tavern. Nine times we met on the affair; nine times I paid four pounds for the supper and claret; and nine guineas I gave the agent for good offices. I then obtained the money, paying ten *per cent.* advance; and at the tenth meeting gave another supper, and disbursed fifteen pounds for the writings.

Others, who styled themselves brokers, would only trust their money upon goods: that I might, therefore, try every art of expensive folly, I took a house and furnished it. I amused myself with despoiling my moveables of their glossy appearance, for fear of alarming the lender with suspicions; and in this I succeeded so well, that he favoured me with one hundred and sixty pounds upon that which was rated at seven hundred. I then found that I was to maintain a guardian about me to prevent the goods from being broken or destroyed. This was, indeed, an unexpected tax; but it was too late to recede; and I comforted myself, that I might prevent a creditor, of whom I had some apprehensions, from seizing, by having a prior execution always in the house.

By such means I had so embarrassed myself, that my whole attention was engaged in contriving excuses, and raising small sums to quiet such as words would no longer mollify. It cost me eighty pounds in presents to Mr. Leech the attorney, for his forbearance of one hundred, which he solicited me to take when I had no need. I was perpetually harassed with importunate demands, and insulted by wretches, who a few months before would not have dared to raise their eyes from the dust before me. I lived in continual terror, frighted by every noise at the door, and terrified at the approach of every step quicker than common. I never retired to rest, without feeling the justness of the Spanish proverb, "Let

him who sleeps too much, borrow the pillow of a debtor;" my solicitude and vexation kept me long waking; and when I had closed my eyes, I was pursued or insulted by visionary bailiffs.

When I reflected upon the meanness of the shifts I had reduced myself to, I could not but curse the folly and extravagance that had overwhelmed me in a sea of troubles, from which it was highly improbable that I should ever emerge. I had sometime lived in hopes of an estate at the death of my uncle; but he disappointed me by marrying his housekeeper; and catching an opportunity soon after of quarrelling with me, for settling twenty pounds a year upon a girl whom I had seduced, told me that he would take care to prevent his fortune from being squandered upon prostitutes.

Nothing now remained, but the chance of extricating myself by marriage; a scheme which, I flattered myself, nothing but my present distress would have made me think on with patience. I determined, therefore, to look out for a tender novice, with a large fortune, at her own disposal; and accordingly fixed my eyes on Miss Biddy Simper. I had now paid her six or seven visits; and so fully convinced her of my being a gentleman and a rake, that I made no doubt that both her person and fortune would be soon mine.

At this critical time, Miss Gripe called upon me, in a chariot bought with my money, and loaded with trinkets that I had in my days of affluence lavished on her. Those days were now over; and there was little hope that they would ever return. She was not able to withstand the temptation of ten pounds that Talon the bailiff offered her, but brought him into my apartment disguised in a livery; and taking my sword to the window, under pretence of admiring the workmanship, beckoned him to seize me.

Delay would have been expensive without use, as the debt was too considerable for payment or bail; I therefore suffered myself to be immediately conducted to jail.

Vestibulum ante ipsum primisque in faucibus Orci,
Luctus & ultrices posuere cubilia curæ;
Pallentesque habitant morbi, tristique senectus,
Et metus, et malesuada fames, et turpis egestas. VIRG.

Just in the gate and in the jaws of hell,
Revengeful cares and sullen sorrows dwell;
And pale diseases, and repining age;
Want, fear, and famine's unresisted rage. DRYDEN

Confinement of any kind is dreadful; a prison is sometimes able to shock those, who endure it in a good cause; let

your imagination, therefore, acquaint you, with what I have not words to express, and conceive, if possible, the horrors of imprisonment attended with reproach and ignominy, of involuntary association with the refuse of mankind, with wretches who were before too abandoned for society, but being now freed from shame or fear, are hourly improving their vices by consorting with each other.

There are, ho[illegible] like myself imprisonment has rather mort[illegible]; with these only I converse; and of t[illegible]ps hereafter receive some account from [illegible]

[illegible]le servant,

MYSARGYRUS.

NUMB. [illegible], April 10, 1753.*

Nulla fides regni sociis omnisque potestas
Impatiens consortis erit. LUCAN.

No faith of partnership dominion owns;
Still discord hovers o'er divided thrones.

IT is well known, that many things appear plausible in speculation, which can never be reduced to practice; and that of the numberless projects that have flattered mankind with theoretical speciousness, few have served any other purpose than to show the ingenuity of their contrivers. A voyage to the moon, however romantic and absurd the scheme may now appear, since the properties of air have been better understood, seemed highly probable to many of the aspiring wits in the last century, who began to doat upon their glossy plumes, and fluttered with impatience for the hour of their departure;

.....Pereant vestigia mille
Ante fugam, absentemque ferit gravis ungula campum.

Hills, vales, and floods appear already crost;
And, ere he starts, a thousand steps are lost. POPE.

* The first sketch of this paper may be seen in Boswell's Life of Johnson, vol. i. p. 178. C.

Among the fallacies which only experience can detect, there are some of which, scarcely experience itself can destroy the influence; some which, by a captivating show of indubitable certainty, are perpetually gaining upon the human mind; and which, though every trial ends in disappointment, obtain new credit, as the sense of miscarriage wears gradually away, persuade us to try again what we have tried already, and expose us by the same failure to double vexation.

Of this tempting, this delusive kind, is the expectation of great performances by confederated strength. The speculatist, when he has carefully observed how much may be performed by a single hand, calculates by a very easy operation the force of thousands, and goes on accumulating power till resistance vanishes before it; then rejoices in the success of his new scheme, and wonders at the folly or idleness of former ages, who have lived in want of what might so readily be procured, and suffered themselves to be debarred from happiness by obstacles which one united effort would have so easily surmounted.

But this gigantic phantom of collective power vanishes at once into air and emptiness, at the first attempt to put it into action. The different apprehensions, the discordant passions, the jarring interests of men, will scarcely permit that many should unite in one undertaking.

Of a great and complicated design, some will never be brought to discern the end; and of the several means by which it may be accomplished, the choice will be a perpetual subject of debate, as every man is swayed in his determination by his own knowledge or convenience. In a long series of action, some will languish with fatigue, and some be drawn off by present gratifications; some will loiter because others labour, and some will cease to labour because others loiter; and if once they come within prospect of success and profit, some will be greedy and others envious; some will undertake more than they can perform, to enlarge their claims of advantage; some will perform less than they undertake, lest their labours should chiefly turn to the benefit of others.

The history of mankind informs us that a single power is very seldom broken by a confederacy. States of different interests, and aspects malevolent to each other, may be united for a time by common distress; and in the ardour of self preservation fall unanimously upon an enemy, by whom they are all equally endangered. But if their first attack can be withstood, time will never fail to dissolve their union; success and miscarriage will be equally destructive: after the conquest of a province, they will quarrel in the division; af-

ter the loss of a battle, all will be endeavouring to secure themselves by abandoning the rest.

From the impossibility of confining numbers to the constant and uniform prosecution of a common interest, arises the difficulty of securing subjects against the encroachment of governors. Power is always gradually stealing away from the many to the few, because the few are more vigilant and consistent; [illegible] a smaller number, till in time it centres i[illegible]

Thus all the [illegible]nt instituted among mankind, perpetual [illegible]narchy; and power, however diffused thr[illegible]mmunity, is by negligence or corruption, c[illegible]ess, reposed at last in the chief magistrate.

"There neve[illegible]rift, "more than five or six men of genius i[illegible]ey were united, the world could not stand [illegible]t is happy, therefore, for mankind, that of this union there is no probability. As men take in a wider compass of intellectual survey, they are more likely to choose different objects of pursuit; as they see more ways to the same end, they will be less easily persuaded to travel together; as each is better qualified to form an independent scheme of private greatness, he will reject with greater obstinacy the project of another; as each is more able to distinguish himself as the head of a party, he will less readily be made a follower or an associate.

The reigning philosophy informs us, that the vast bodies which constitute the universe, are regulated in their progress through the ethereal spaces, by the perpetual agency of contrary forces; by one of which they are restrained from deserting their orbits, and losing themselves in the immensity of heaven; and held off by the other from rushing together, and clustering round their centre with everlasting cohesion.

The same contrariety of impulse may be perhaps discovered in the motions of men; we are formed for society, not for combination; we are equally unqualified to live in a close connection with our fellow beings, and in total separation from them; we are attracted towards each other by general sympathy, but kept back from contact by private interest.

Some philosophers have been foolish enough to imagine, that improvements might be made in the system of the universe, by a different arrangement of the orbs of heaven; and politicians, equally ignorant and equally presumptuous, may easily be led to suppose, that the happiness of our world would be promoted by a different tendency of the human mind. It appears, indeed, to a slight and superficial observer, that

many things impracticable in our present state, might be easily effected, if mankind were better disposed to union and cooperation; but a little reflection will discover, that if confederacies were easily formed, they would lose their efficacy, since numbers would be opposed to numbers, and unanimity to unanimity; and instead of the present petty competitions of individuals or single families, multitudes would be supplanting multitudes, and thousands plotting against thousands.

There is no class of the human species, of which the union seems to have been more expected, than of the learned; the rest of the world have almost always agreed to shut scholars up together in colleges and cloisters; surely not without hope, that they would look for that happiness in concord, which they were debarred from finding in variety; and that such conjunctions of intellect would recompense the munificence of founders and patrons, by performances above the reach of any single mind.

But discord, who found means to roll her apple into the banqueting chamber of the goddesses, has had the address to scatter her laurels in the seminaries of learning. The friendship of students and of beauties is for the most part equally sincere, and equally durable; as both depend for happiness on the regard of others, on that of which the value arises merely from comparison, they are both exposed to perpetual jealousies, and both incessantly employed in schemes to intercept the praises of each other.

I am, however, far from intending to inculcate, that this confinement of the studious to studious companions, has been wholly without advantage to the public; neighbourhood, where it does not conciliate friendship, incites competition; and he that would contentedly rest in a lower degree of excellence, where he had no rival to dread, will be urged by his impatience of inferiority to incessant endeavours after great attainments.

These stimulations of honest rivalry are, perhaps, the chief effects of academies and societies; for whatever be the bulk of their joint labours, every single piece is always the production of an individual, that owes nothing to his colleagues but the contagion of diligence, a resolution to write, because the rest are writing, and the scorn of obscurity while the rest are illustrious.

Numb. 50. Saturday, April 28, 1753.

Quicunque turpi fraude semel innotuit,
Etiamsi vera dici, amittit fidem. Phædr.

T[illegible] has deceiv'd,
T[illegible], is ne'er believ'd.

When Aristo[illegible]ed, what a man could gain by uttering falsh[illegible], "Not to be credited when he shall tell the [illegible]

The characte[illegible]ce so hateful and contemptible, that even o[illegible]ost their virtue it might be expected that fro[illegible]of truth they should be restrained by their [illegible] every other vice that disgraces human nature, may be kept in countenance by applause and association; the corrupter of virgin innocence sees himself envied by the men, and at least not detested by the women; the drunkard may easily unite with beings, devoted like himself to noisy merriments or silent insensibility, who will celebrate his victories over the novices of intemperance, boast themselves the companions of his prowess, and tell with rapture of the multitudes whom unsuccessful emulation has hurried to the grave; even the robber and the cut-throat have their followers, who admire their address and intrepidity, their stratagems of rapine, and their fidelity to the gang.

The liar, and only the liar, is invariably and universally despised, abandoned, and disowned; he has no domestic consolations, which he can oppose to the censure of mankind; he can retire to no fraternity, where his crimes may stand in the place of virtues; but is given up to the hisses of the multitude, without friend and without apologist. It is the peculiar condition of falsehood, to be equally detested by the good and bad; "The devils," says Sir Thomas Brown, "do not tell lies to one another; for truth is necessary to all societies; nor can the society of hell subsist without it."

It is natural to expect, that a crime thus generally detested should be generally avoided; at least, that none should expose himself to unabated and unpitied infamy, without an adequate temptation; and that to guilt so easily detected, and so severely punished, an adequate temptation would not readily be found.

Yet so it is, that in defiance of censure and contempt, truth is frequently violated; and scarcely the most vigilant and unremitted circumspection will secure him that mixes with mankind, from being hourly deceived by men whom it can

scarcely be imagined, that they mean any injury to him or profit to themselves; even where the subject of conversation could not have been expected to put the passions in motion, or to have excited either hope or fear, or zeal, or malignity, sufficient to induce any man to put his reputation in hazard, however little he might value it, or to overpower the love of truth, however weak might be its influence.

The casuists have very diligently distinguished lies into their several classes, according to their various degrees of malignity; but they have, I think, generally omitted that which is most common, and, perhaps, not least mischievous: which, since the moralists have not given it a name, I shall distinguish as the *lie* of *vanity*.

To vanity may justly be imputed most of the falsehoods, which every man perceives hourly playing upon his ear, and, perhaps, most of those that are propagated with success. To the lie of commerce, and the lie of malice, the motive is so apparent, that they are seldom negligently or implicitly received; suspicion is always watchful over the practices of interest; and whatever the hope of gain, or desire of mischief, can prompt one man to assert, another is by reasons equally cogent incited to refute. But vanity pleases herself with such slight gratifications, and looks forward to pleasure so remotely consequential, that her practices raise no alarm, and her stratagems are not easily discovered.

Vanity is, indeed, often suffered to pass unpursued by suspicion, because he that would watch her motions, can never be at rest; fraud and malice are bounded in their influence: some opportunity of time and place is necessary to their agency; but scarce any man is abstracted one moment from his vanity; and he, to whom truth affords no gratifications, is generally inclined to seek them in falsehoods.

It is remarked by sir Kenelm Digby, "that every man has a desire to appear superior to others, though it were only in having seen what they have not seen." Such an accidental advantage, since it neither implies merit, nor confers dignity, one would think should not be desired so much as to be counterfeited; yet even this vanity, trifling as it is, produces innumerable narratives, all equally false; but more or less credible in proportion to the skill or confidence of the relater. How many may a man of diffusive conversation count among his acquaintances, whose lives have been signalized by numberless escapes; who never crossed the river but in a storm, or take a journey into the country without more adventures than befel the knights errant of ancient times in pathless forests or enchanted castles! how many must he know, to whom

portents and prodigies are of daily occurrence; and for whom nature is hourly working wonders invisible to every other eye, only to supply them with subjects of conversation!

Others there are that amuse themselves with the dissemination of falsehood, at greater hazard of detection and disgrace; men marked out by some lucky planet for universal confidence and [illegible] ve been consulted in every difficulty, intr[illegible] ret, and summoned to every transaction; i[illegible] icity of these men, to stun all companies [illegible] ation; to still doubt, and overbear oppo[illegible] knowledge or authentic intelligence. A[illegible] with a strong memory or brisk imaginat[illegible] cle of an obscure club, and till time disco[illegible] dictates to his hearers with uncontroled a[illegible] blic question be started, he was present at [illegible] w fashion be mentioned, he was at court the first day of its appearance; if a new performance of literature draws the attention of the public, he has patronised the author, and seen his work in manuscript; if a criminal of eminence be condemned to die, he often predicted his fate, and endeavoured his reformation; and who that lives at a distance from the scene of action, will dare to contradict a man, who reports from his own eyes and ears, and to whom all persons and affairs are thus intimately known?

This kind of falsehood is generally successful for a time, because it is practised at first with timidity and caution; but the prosperity of the liar is of short duration; the reception of one story is always an incitement to the forgery of another less probable; and he goes on to triumph over tacit credulity, till pride or reason rises up against him, and his companions will no longer endure to see him wiser than themselves.

It is apparent, that the inventors of all these fictions intend some exaltation of themselves, and are led off by the pursuit of honour from their attendance upon truth; their narratives always imply some consequence in favour of their courage, their sagacity, or their activity, their familiarity with the learned, or their reception among the great; they are always bribed by the present pleasure of seeing themselves superior to those that surround them, and receiving the homage of silent attention and envious admiration.

But vanity is sometimes excited to fiction by less visible gratifications; the present age abounds with a race of liars who are content with the consciousness of falsehood, and whose pride is to deceive others without any gain or glory to themselves. Of this tribe it is the supreme pleasure to remark a lady in the playhouse or the park, and to publish,

under the character of a man suddenly enamoured, an advertisement in the news of the next day, containing a minute description of her person and her dress. From this artifice, however, no other effect can be expected, than perturbations which the writer can never see, and conjectures of which he never can be informed; some mischief, however, he hopes he has done; and to have done mischief, is of some importance. He sets his invention to work again, and produces a narrative of a robbery or a murder, with all the circumstances of time and place accurately adjusted. This is a jest of greater effect and longer duration; if he fixes his scene at a proper distance, he may for several days keep a wife in terror for her husband, or a mother for her son; and please himself with reflecting, that by his abilities and address some addition is made to the miseries of life.

There is, I think, an ancient law of Scotland, by which *leasing making* was capitally punished. I am, indeed, far from desiring to increase in this kingdom the number of executions; yet I cannot but think, that they who destroy the confidence of society, weaken the credit of intelligence, and interrupt the security of life; harass the delicate with shame, and perplex the timorous with alarms; might very properly be awakened to a sense of their crimes, by denunciations of a whipping post or pillory; since many are so insensible of right and wrong, that they have no standard of action but the law; nor feel guilt, but as they dread punishment.

Numb. 53. Tuesday, May 8, 1753.

Quisque suos patimur Manes. Virg.

Each has his lot, and bears the fate he drew.

Fleet, May 6.

Sir—In consequence my engagements, I address you once more from the habitations of misery. In this place, from which business and pleasure are equally excluded, and in which our only employment and diversion is to hear the narratives of each other, I might much sooner have gathered materials for a letter, had I not hoped to have been reminded of my promise; but since I find myself placed in the regions of oblivion, where I am no less neglected by you than by the rest of mankind, I resolved no longer to wait for solicitation,

but stole early this evening from between gloomy sullenness and riotous merriment, to give you an account of part of my companions.

One of the most eminent members of our club is Mr. Edward Scamper, a man of whose name the Olympic heros would not have been ashamed. Ned was born to a small estate, which he determined to improve; and therefore, as soon as he became of age, mortgaged part of his land to buy a mare and stall [illegible] es for the course. He was at first very su [illegible] ed several of the king's plates, as he is [illegible] oasting, at the expense of very little more [illegible] heir value. At last, however, he discov [illegible] brought him more honour than profit [illegible] fore, to be rich as well as illustrious, he r [illegible] kets by another mortgage, became on a su [illegible] ttor, and resolving not to trust a jockey [illegible] ode his horse himself, distanced two of h [illegible] first heat, and at last won the race, by forcing his horse on a descent to full speed, at the hazard of his neck. His estate was thus repaired, and some friends that had no souls advised him to give over; but Ned now knew the way to riches, and therefore without caution increased his expenses. From this hour he talked and dreamed of nothing but a horse race; and rising soon to the summit of equestrian reputation, he was constantly expected on every course, divided all his time between lords and jockeys, and, as the unexperienced regulated their bets by his example, gained a great deal of money by laying openly on one horse, and secretly on the other. Ned was now so sure of growing rich, that he involved his estate in a third mortgage, borrowed money of all his friends, and risked his whole fortune upon Bay Lincoln. He mounted with beating heart, started fair, and won the first heat; but in the second, as he was pushing against the foremost of his rivals, his girth broke, his shoulder was dislocated, and before he was dismissed by the surgeon, two bailiffs fastened upon him, and he saw Newmarket no more. His daily amusement for four years has been to blow the signal for starting, to make imaginary matches, to repeat the pedigree of Bay Lincoln, and to form resolutions against trusting another groom with the choice of his girth.

The next in seniority is Mr Timothy Snug, a man of deep contrivance and impenetrable secrecy. His father died with the reputation of more wealth than he possessed; Tim, therefore, entered the world with a reputed fortune of ten thousand pounds. Of this he very well knew that eight thousand was

imaginary; but being a man of refined policy, and knowing how much honour is annexed to riches, he resolved never to detect his own poverty: but furnished his house with elegance, scattered his money with profusion, encouraged every scheme of costly pleasure, spoke of petty losses with negligence, and on the day before an execution entered his doors, had proclaimed at a public table his resolution to be jolted no longer in a hackney coach.

Another of my companions is the magnanimous Jack Scatter, the son of a country gentleman, who having no other care than to leave him rich, considered that literature could not be had without expense; masters would not teach for nothing; and when a book was bought and read, it would sell for little. Jack was, therefore, taught to read and write by the butler; and when this acquisition was made, was left to pass his days in the kitchen and the stable, where he heard no crime censured but covetousness and distrust of poor honest servants, and where all the praise was bestowed on good housekeeping and a free heart. At the death of his father, Jack set himself to retreive the honour of his family; he abandoned his cellar to the butler, ordered his groom to provide hay and corn at discretion, took his housekeeper's word for the expenses of the kitchen, allowed all his servants to do their work by deputies, permitted his domestics to keep his house open to their relations and acquaintance, and in ten years was conveyed hither, without having purchased by the loss of his patrimony either honour or pleasure, or obtained any other gratification, than that of having corrupted the neighbouring villagers by luxury and idlenesss.

Dick Serge was a draper in Cornhill, and passed eight years in prosperous diligence, without any care but to keep his books, or any ambition but to be in time an alderman: but then, by some unaccountable revolution in his understanding, he became enamoured of wit and humour, despised the conversation of pedlars and stockjobbers, and rambled every night to the regions of gaiety, in quest of company suited to his taste. The wits at first flocked about him for sport, and afterwards for interest; some found their way into his books, and some into his pockets: the man of adventure was equipped from his shop for the pursuit of a fortune: and he had sometimes the honour to have his security accepted when his friends were in distress. Elated with these associations, he soon learned to neglect his shop; and having drawn his money out of the funds, to avoid the necessity of teasing men of honour for trifling debts, he has been forced

at last to retire hither till his friends can procure him a post at court.

Another that joins in the same mess is Bob Cornice, whose life has been spent in fitting up a house. About ten years ago Bob purchased the country habitation of a bankrupt; the mere shell of a building Bob holds no great matter; the inside is the test of his house he was no sooner master, than he s workmen to his assistance, tore up the flc m anew, stripped off the wainscot, drew n their frames, altered the disposition of tu places, and cast the whole fabric into a ne care was to have his ceilings painted, hi nd his chimneypieces carved; every thing the ablest hands; Bob's business was to en with a microscope, and call upon them to performances, and heighten excellence to perfection. The reputation of his house now brings round him a daily confluence of visitants, and every one tells him of some elegance which he has hitherto overlooked, some convenience not yet procured, or some new mode in ornament or furniture. Bob, who had no wish but to be admired, nor any guide but the fashion, thought every thing beautiful in proportion as it was new, and considered his work as unfinished, while any observer could suggest an addition; some alteration was therefore every day made without any other motive than the charms of novelty. A traveller at last suggested to him the convenience of a grotto: Bob immediately ordered the mount of his garden to be excavated; and having laid out a large sum in shells and minerals was busy in regulating the disposition of the colours and lustres, when two gentlemen, who had asked permission to see his gardens, presented him a writ, and lead him off to less elegant apartments.

I know not, sir, whether among this fraternity of sorrow you will think any much to be pitied; nor indeed do many of them appear to solicit compassion, for they generally applaud their own conduct and despise those whom want of taste or spirit suffers to grow rich. It were happy if the prisons of the kingdom were filled only with characters like these, men whom prosperity could not make useful, and whom ruin cannot make wise; but there are among us many who raise different sensations, many that owe their present misery to the seductions of treachery, the strokes of casualty, or the tenderness of pity; many whose sufferings disgrace society, and whose virtues would adorn it; of these, when

familiarity shall have enabled me to recount their stories without horrour, you may expect another narrative from,

Sir,

Your most humble servant,

MYSARGYRUS.

NUMB. 58. SATURDAY, May 25, 1753.

Damnant quod non intelligunt. CIC.

They condemn what they do not understand.

EURIPIDES, having presented Socrates with the writings of Heraclitus, a philosopher famed for involution and obscurity, inquired afterwards his opinion of their merit. "What I understand," said Socrates, "I find to be excellent; and, therefore, believe that to be of equal value which I cannot understand."

The reflection of every man who reads this passage will suggest to him the difference between the practice of Socrates, and that of modern critics. Socrates, who had, by long observation upon himself and others, discovered the weakness of the strongest, and the dimness of the most enlightened intellect, was afraid to decide hastily in his own favour, or to conclude that an author had written without meaning, because he could not immediately catch his ideas: he knew that the faults of books are often more justly imputable to the reader, who sometimes wants attention, and sometimes penetration; whose understanding is often obstructed by prejudice, and often dissipated by remissness; who comes sometimes to a new study, unfurnished with knowledge previously necessary: and finds difficulties insuperable, for want of ardour sufficient to encounter them.

Obscurity and clearness are relative terms; to some readers scarce any book is easy, to others not many are difficult; and surely they, whom neither any exuberant praise bestowed by others, nor any eminent conquests over stubborn problems, have entitled to exalt themselves above the common orders of mankind, might condescend to imitate the candour of Socrates; and where they find incontestible proofs of superior genius, be content to think that there is justness in the connection which they cannot trace, and cogency in the reasoning which they cannot comprehend.

This diffidence is never more reasonable than in the perusal of the authors of antiquity; of those whose works have

been the delight of ages, and transmitted as the great inheritance of mankind from one generation to another; surely, no man can, without the utmost arrogance, imagine that he brings any superiority of understanding to the perusal of these books which have been preserved in the devastation of cities, and snatched up from the wreck of nations; which those who fled before barbarians have been careful to carry off in the hurry of migration, a[illegible] arians have repented the destruction. I[illegible] le venerable by the uniform attestations of [illegible] y passages shall appear unworthy of that p[illegible] ave formerly received, let us not immediat[illegible] they owed their reputation to dulness or bi[illegible] at least that our ancestors had some reaso[illegible] is, and that our ignorance of those reasons [illegible] m them.

It often happe[illegible] s reputation is endangered in succeeding tim[illegible] raised the loudest applause among his cotemporaries; nothing is read with greater pleasure than allusions to recent facts, reigning opinions, or present controversies; but when facts are forgotten, and controversies extinguished, these favourite touches lose all their graces; and the author in his descent to posterity must be left to the mercy of chance, without any power of ascertaining the memory of those things, to which he owed his luckiest thoughts and his kindest reception.

On such occasions every reader should remember the diffidence of Socrates, and repair by his candour the injuries of time; he should impute the seeming defects of his author to some chasm of intelligence, and suppose that the sense which is now weak was once forcible, and the expression which is now dubious formerly determinate.

How much the mutilation of ancient history has taken away from the beauty of poetical performances, may be conjectured from the light which a lucky commentator sometimes effuses, by the recovery of an incident that had been long forgotten; thus, in the third book of Horace, Juno's denunciations against those that should presume to raise again the walls of Troy, could for many ages please only by splendid images and swelling language, of which no man discovered the use or propriety, till Le Fevre, by showing on what occasion the Ode was written, changed wonder to rational delight. Many passages yet undoubtedly remain in the same author, which an exacter knowledge of the incidents of his time would clear from objections. Among these I have always numbered the following lines;

Aurum per medios ire satellites,
Et perrumpere amat saxa, potentius
Icti fulmineo. Concidit Auguris
Argivi domus ob lucrum
Demersa excidio. Diffidit urbium
Portas vir Macedo, et subruit æmulos
Reges muneribus. Munera navium
Saevos illaqueant duces.

Stronger than thunder's winged force,
All powerful gold can spread its course,
Through watchful guards its passage make.
And loves through solid walls to break;
From gold the overwhelming woes,
That crush'd the Grecian auger rose;
Philip with gold through cities broke,
And rival monarchs felt his yoke;
Captains of ships to gold are slaves,
Though fierce as their own winds and waves. FRANCIS.

The close of this passage by which every reader is now disappointed and offended, was probably the delight of the Roman court; it cannot be imagined that Horace, after having given to gold the force of thunder, and told of its power to storm cities and to conquer kings, would have concluded his account of its efficacy with its influence over naval commanders, had he not alluded to some fact then current in the mouths of men, and therefore more interesting for a time than the conquests of Philip. Of the like kind may be reckoned another stanza in the same book;

....*Jussa coram non sine conscio*
Surgit marito, seu vocat institor
Sue navis Hispanæ magister
Dedecorum pretiosus emptor.

The conscious husband bids her rise,
When some rich factor courts her charms,
Who calls the wanton to his arms,
And, prodigal of wealth and fame,
Profusely buys the costly shame. FRANCIS.

He has little knowledge of Horace who imagines that the factor, or the Spanish merchant, are mentioned by chance; there was undoubtedly some popular story of an intrigue, which those names recalled to the memory of his reader.

The flame of his genius in other parts, though somewhat dimmed by time, is not totally eclipsed; his address and judgment yet appear, though much of the spirit and vigour of his sentiment is lost; this has happened to the twentieth ode of the first book;

Vile potabis modicis Sabinum
Cantharis, Græca quod ego ipse testa
Conditum levi; datus in theatro
Cùm tibi plausus,
Care Mæcenas eques. Ut paterni
Fluminis ripæ, simul et jocosa
Redderet laudes tibi Vaticani
Montis imago.

A poe[illegible] heap,
Sho[illegible] my guest,
The v[illegible] rape,
But [illegible] crown the feast!
'Twas [illegible] cask,
Its r[illegible] away;
I seal'[illegible] k!
Wit[illegible] he glorious day,
When [illegible] y name
Spr[illegible] ound,
Floati[illegible] stream,
And Echo, play[illegible] nymph, return'd the sound.

FRANCIS.

We here easily remark the intermixture of a happy compliment with an humble imitation; but certainly are less delighted than those, to whom the mention of the applause bestowed upon Mæcenas, gave occasion to recount the actions or words that produced it.

Two lines which have exercised the ingenuity of modern critics, may, I think, be reconciled to the judgment, by an easy supposition; Horace thus addresses Agrippa;

Scriberis Vario fortis, et hostium
Victor, Mæonii carminis alite.

Varius, a *swan of Homer's wing,*
Shall brave Agrippa's conquests sing.

That Varius should be called "A bird of Homeric song," appears so harsh to modern ears, that an emendation of the text has been proposed; but surely the learning of the ancients had been long ago obliterated, had every man thought himself at liberty to corrupt the lines which he did not understand. If we imagine that Varius had been by any of his cotemporaries celebrated under the appellation of *Musarum Ales,* the swan of the Muses, the language of Horace becomes graceful and familiar; and that such a compliment was at least possible, we know from the transformation feigned by Horace of himself.

The most elegant compliment that was paid to Addison, is of this obscure and perishable kind;

When panting virtue her last efforts made,
You brought your CLIO to the virgin's aid.

These lines must please as long as they are understood; but can be understood only by those that have observed Addison's signatures in the Spectator.

The nicety of these minute allusions I shall exemplify by another instance, which I take this occasion to mention, because, as I am told, the commentators have omitted it. Tibullus addresses Cynthia in this manner;

Te spectem, suprema mihi cùm venerit hora,
Te teneam moriens deficiente manu.

Before my closing eyes dear Cynthia stand,
Held weakly by my fainting trembling hand.

To these lines Ovid thus refers in his elegy on the death of Tibullus;

Cynthia decedens, felicius, inquit, amata
Sum tibi; vixisti dum tuus ignis eram,
Cui Nemesis, quid, ait, tibi sunt mea damna dolori?
Me tenuit moriens deficiente manu.

Blest was my reign, retiring Cynthia cry'd;
Not till he left my breast, Tibullus dy'd.
Forbear, said Nemesis, my loss to moan,
The fainting trembling hand was mine alone.

The beauty of this passage which consists in the appropriation made by Nemesis of the line originally directed to Cynthia, had been wholly imperceptible to succeeding ages, had chance, which has destroyed so many greater volumes, deprived us likewise of the poems of Tibullus.

NUMB. 62. SATURDAY, June 9, 1753.

O Fortuna viris, invida fortibus
Quam non æqua bonis præmia dividis. SENECA.

Capricious fortune ever joys,
With partial hand to deal the prize,
To crush the brave and cheat the wise.

TO THE ADVENTURER.

Fleet, June 6.

SIR—To the account of such of my companions as are imprisoned without being miserable, or are miserable without any claim to compassion; I promised to add the histories of those, whose virtue has made them unhappy, or whose misfortunes

are at least without a crime. That this catalogue should be very numerous, neither you nor your readers ought to expect; "rari quippe boni;" "the good are few." Virtue is uncommon in all the classes of humanity; and I suppose it will scarcely be imagined more frequent in a prison than in other places.

Yet in these gloomy regions is to be found the tenderness, the generosity, the philanthropy of Serenus, who might have lived in competence and ease, if he could have looked without emotion on the miseries of another. Serenus was one of those exalted minds, whom knowledge and sagacity could not make suspicious; who poured out his soul in boundless intimacy, and thought community of possessions the law of friendship. The friend of Serenus was arrested for debt, and after many endeavours to soften his creditor, sent his wife to solicit that assistance which never was refused. The tears and importunity of female distress were more than was necessary to move the heart of Serenus; he hasted immediately away, and conferring a long time with his friend, found him confident that if the present pressure was taken off, he should soon be able to reestablish his affairs. Serenus accustomed to believe, and afraid to aggravate distress, did not attempt to detect the fallacies of hope, nor reflect that every man overwhelmed with calamity, believes, that if that was removed he should immediately be happy; he, therefore, with little hesitation offered himself as surety.

In the first raptures of escape all was joy, gratitude and confidence; the friend of Serenus displayed his prospects, and counted over the sums of which he should infallibly be master before the day of payment. Serenus in a short time began to find his danger, but could not prevail with himself to repent of beneficence; and therefore suffered himself still to be amused with projects which he durst not consider, for fear of finding them impracticable. The debtor, after he had tried every method of raising money which art or indigence could prompt, wanted either fidelity or resolution to surrender himself to prison, and left Serenus to take his place.

Serenus has often proposed to the creditor, to pay him whatever he shall appear to have lost by the flight of his friend; but however reasonable this proposal may be thought, avarice and brutality have been hitherto inexorable, and Serenus still continues to languish in prison.

In this place, however, where want makes almost every man selfish, or desperation gloomy, it is the good fortune of Serenus not to live without a friend; he passes most of his

hours in the conversation of Candidus, a man whom the same virtuous ductility has, with some difference of circumstances, made equally unhappy. Candidus, when he was young, helpless, and ignorant, found a patron that educated, protected and supported him; his patron being more vigilant for others than himself, left at his death an only son, destitute and friendless. Candidus was eager to repay the benefits he had received; and having maintained the youth for a few years at his own house, afterwards placed him with a merchant of eminence and gave bonds to a great value as a security for his conduct.

The young man removed too early from the only eye of which he dreaded the observation, and deprived of the only instruction which he heard with reverence, soon learned to consider virtue as restraint and restraint as oppression; and to look with a longing eye at every expense to which he could not reach, and every pleasure which he could not partake; by degrees he deviated from his first regularity, and unhappily mingling among young men busy in dissipating the gains of their father's industry, he forgot the precepts of Candidus, spent the evening in parties of pleasure, and the morning in expedients to support his riots. He was, however, dexterous and active in his business; and his master, being secured against any consequences of dishonesty, was very little solicitous to inspect his manners, or to inquire how he passed those hours, which were not immediately devoted to the business of his profession; when he was informed of the young man's extravagance or debauchery, "let his bondsman look to that," said he, "I have taken care of myself."

Thus the unhappy spendthrift proceeded from folly to folly, and from vice to vice, with the connivance, if not the encouragement of his master; till in the heat of a nocturnal revel he committed such violences in the street as drew upon him a criminal prosecution. Guilty and unexperienced, he knew not what course to take; to confess his crime to Candidus, and solicit his interposition was little less dreadful than to stand before the frown of a court of justice. Having, therefore, passed the day with anguish in his heart and distraction in his looks, he seized at night a very large sum of money in the countinghouse, and setting out he knew not whither, was heard of no more.

The consequence of his flight was the ruin of Candidus; ruin surely undeserved and irreproachable, and such as the laws of a just government ought either to prevent or repair; nothing is more inequitable than that one man should suffer for the crimes of *another, for crimes* which he neither prompt-

ed nor permitted, which he could neither foresee nor prevent. When we consider the weakness of human resolutions and the inconsistency of human conduct, it must appear absurd that one man shall engage for another, that he will not change his opinions or alter his conduct.

It is, I think, worthy of consideration, whether since no wager is binding without a possibility of loss on each side, it is not equally reasonable, that no contract should be valid without reciprocal stipulations; but in this case, and others of the same kind, what is stipulated on his side to whom the bond is given? He takes advantage of the security, neglects his affairs, omits his duty, suffers timorous wickedness to grow daring by degrees, permits appetite to call for new gratifications, and perhaps, secretly longs for the time in which he shall have power to seize the forfeiture; and if virtue or gratitude should prove too strong for temptation, and a young man persist in honesty, however instigated by his passions, what can secure him at last against a false accusation? I for my part always shall suspect, that he who can by such methods secure his property, will go one step further to increase it; nor can I think that man safely trusted with the means of mischief, who, by his desire to have them in his hands, gives an evident proof how much less he values his neighbour's happiness than his own.

Another of our companions is Lentulus, a man whose dignity of birth was very ill supported by his fortune. As some of the first offices in the kingdom were filled by his relations, he was early invited to court, and encouraged by caresses and promises to attendance and solicitation: a constant appearance in splendid company necessarily required magnificence of dress; and a frequent participation of fashionable amusements forced him into expense: but these measures were requisite to his success; since every body knows, that to be lost to sight is to be lost to remembrance, and that he who desires to fill a vacancy, must be always at hand, lest some man of greater vigilance should step in before him.

By this course of life his little fortune was every day made less; but he received so many distinctions in public, and was known to resort so familiarly to the houses of the great, that every man looked on his preferment as certain, and believed that its value would compensate for its slowness; he, therefore, found no difficulty in obtaining credit for all that his rank or his vanity made necessary; and, as ready payment was not expected, the bills were proportionably enlarged, and the value of the hazard or delay were adjusted solely by the equity of the creditor. At length death deprived Lentulus of

one of his patrons, and a revolution in the ministry of another; so that all his prospects vanished at once, and those that had before encouraged his expense, began to perceive that their money was in danger: there was now no other contention but who should first seize upon his person, and by forcing immediate payment, deliver him up naked to the vengeance of the rest. In pursuance of this scheme, one of them invited him to a tavern, and procured him to be arrested at the door: but Lentulus instead of endeavouring secretly to pacify him by payment, gave notice to the rest, and offered to divide amongst them the remnant of his fortune; they feasted six hours at his expense, to deliberate on his proposal; and at last determined, that, as he could not offer more than five shillings in the pound, it would be more prudent to keep him in prison, till he could procure from his relations the payment of his debts.

Lentulus is not the only man confined within these walls on the same account; the like procedure upon the like motives, is common among men whom yet the law allows to partake the use of fire and water with the compassionate and the just; who frequent the assemblies of commerce in open day, and talk with detestation and contempt of highwaymen or housebreakers; but, surely, that man must be confessedly robbed, who is compelled, by whatever means, to pay the debts which he does not owe; nor can I look with equal hatred upon him, who, at the hazard of his life, holds out his pistol and demands my purse, as on him who plunders under the shelter of the law, and by detaining my son, or my friend in prison, extorts from me the price of their liberty. No man can be more an enemy to society than he, by whose machinations our virtues are turned to our disadvantage; he is less destructive to mankind that plunders cowardice, than he that preys upon compassion.

I believe, Mr. Adventurer, you will readily confess, that though not one of these, if tried before a commercial judicature, can be wholly acquitted from imprudence or temerity; yet that, in the eye of all who can consider virtue as distinct from wealth, the fault of two of them, at least, is outweighed by the merit; and that of the third is so much extenuated by the circumstances of his life, as not to deserve a perpetual prison; yet must these, with multitudes equally blameless, languish in confinement, till malevolence shall relent, or the law be changed.

I am, sir,

Your humble servant.

MISARGYRUS.

NUMB. 67. TUESDAY, June 26, 1753.

Inventas——vitam excoluere per artes. VIRG.

They polish life by useful arts.

THAT familiarity produces neglect, has been long observed. The effect of all external objects, however great or splendid, ceases with their novelty; the courtier stands without emotion in the royal presence; the rustic tramples under his foot the beauties of the spring with little attention to their colours or their fragrance; and the inhabitant of the coast darts his eye upon the immense diffusion of waters, without awe, wonder, or terror.

Those who have past much of their lives in this great city, look upon its opulence and its multitudes, its extent and variety, with cold indifference; but an inhabitant of the remoter parts of the kingdom is immediately distinguished by a kind of dissipated curiosity, a busy endeavour to divide his attention among a thousand objects, and a wild confusion of astonishment and alarm.

The attention of a new comer is generally first struck by the multiplicity of cries that stun him in the streets, and the variety of merchandise and manufactures which the shopkeepers expose on every hand; and he is apt by unwary bursts of admiration, to excite the merriment and contempt of those who mistake the use of their eyes for effects of their understanding, and confound accidental knowledge with just reasoning.

But surely, these are subjects on which any man may without reproach employ his meditations; the innumerable occupations, among which the thousands that swarm in the streets of London are distributed, may furnish employments to minds of every cast, and capacities of every degree. He that contemplates the extent of this wonderful city, finds it difficult to conceive, by what method plenty is maintained in our markets, and how the inhabitants are regularly supplied with the necessaries of life; but when he examines the shops and warehouses, sees the immense stores of every kind of merchandise piled up for sale, and runs over all the manufactures of art and products of nature, which are every where attracting his eye and soliciting his purse, he will be inclined to conclude, that such quantities cannot easily be exhausted, and that part of mankind must soon stand still for want of employment,

till the wares already provided shall be worn out and destroyed.

As Socrates was passing through the fair at Athens, and casting his eyes over the shops and customers, "how many things are here," says he, "that I do not want!" The same sentiment is every moment rising in the mind of him that walks the streets of London, however inferior in philosophy to Socrates; he beholds a thousand shops crowded with goods, of which he can scarcely tell the use, and which, therefore, he is apt to consider as of no value; and, indeed many of the arts by which families are supported, and wealth is heaped together, are of that minute and superfluous kind, which nothing but experience could evince possible to be prosecuted with advantage, and which, as the world might easily want, it could scarcely be expected to encourage.

But so it is, that custom, curiosity, or wantonness, supplies every art with patrons, and finds purchasers for every manufacture; the world is so adjusted, that not only bread, but riches may be obtained without great abilities, or arduous performances; the most unskilful hand and unenlightened mind have sufficient incitements to industry; for he that is resolutely busy, can scarcely be in want. There is, indeed, no employment, however despicable, from which a man may not promise himself more than competence, when he sees thousands and myriads raised to dignity, by no other merit than that of contributing to supply their neighbours with the means of sucking smoke through a tube of clay; and others raising contributions upon those whose elegance disdains the grossness of smoky luxury, by grinding the same materials into a powder that may at once gratify and impair the smell.

Not only by these popular and modish trifles, but by a thousand unheeded and evanescent kinds of business, are the multitudes of this city preserved from idleness, and consequently from want. In the endless variety of tastes and circumstances that diversify mankind, nothing is so superfluous, but that some one desires it; or so common, but that some one is compelled to buy it. As nothing is useless, but because it is in improper hands, what is thrown away by one is gathered up by another; and the refuse of part of mankind furnishes a subordinate class with the materials necessary to their support.

When I look round on those who are thus variously exerting their qualifications, I cannot but admire the secret concatenation of society that links together the great and the mean, the illustrious and the obscure; and consider with benevolent satisfaction, that no man, unless his body or mind

cure him the conveniences which are enjoyed by the vagrant beggar of a civilized country; he hunts like a wild beast to satisfy his hunger; and when he lies down to rest after a successful chase, cannot pronounce himself secure against the danger of perishing in a few days; he is, perhaps, content with his condition, because he knows not that a better is attainable by man; as he that is born blind does not long for the perception of light, because he cannot conceive the advantages which li[illegible] him; but hunger, wounds, and weariness are [illegible]gh he believes them equally incident to all his [illegible]; and when a tempest compels him to lie s[illegible]t, he cannot justly be concluded equally h[illegible]hom art has exempted from the power of cha[illegible]ke the foregoing year provide for the follov[illegible]

To receive and [illegible] assistance, constitutes the happiness of hum[illegible]y, indeed, preserve his existence in solitude, but can enjoy it only in society; the greatest understanding of an individual, doomed to procure food and clothing for himself, will barely supply him with expedients to keep off death from day to day; but as one of a large community performing only his share of the common business, he gains leisure for intellectual pleasures, and enjoys the happiness of reason and reflection.

Numb. 69. Tuesday, July 3, 1753.

Ferè libenter homines id quod volunt credunt. Cæsar.

Men willingly believe what they wish to be true.

Tully has long ago observed, that no man, however weakened by long life, is so conscious of his own decrepitude, as not to imagine that he may yet hold his station in the world for another year.

Of the truth of this remark every day furnishes new confirmation; there is no time of life, in which men for the most part seem less to expect the stroke of death, than when every other eye sees it impending; or are more busy in providing for another year, than when it is plain to all but themselves, that at another year they cannot arrive. Though every funeral that passes before their eyes evinces the deceitfulness of such expectations, since every man who is born to the grave

thought himself equally certain of living at least till the next year; the survivor still continues to flatter himself, and is never at a loss for some reason why his life should be protracted, and the voracity of death continued to be pacified with some other prey.

But this is only one of the innumerable artifices practised in the universal conspiracy of mankind against themselves; every age and every condition indulges some darling fallacy; every man amuses himself with projects which he knows to be improbable, and which, therefore, he resolves to pursue without daring to examine them. Whatever any man ardently desires, he very readily believes that he shall some time attain; he whose intemperance has overwhelmed with diseases, while he languishes in the spring, expects vigour and recovery from the summer sun; and while he melts away in the summer, transfers his hopes to the frosts of winter; he that gazes upon elegance or pleasure, which want of money hinders him from imitating or partaking, comforts himself that the time of distress will soon be at an end, and that every day brings him nearer to a state of happiness; though he knows it has passed not only without acquisition of advantage, but perhaps without endeavours after it, in the formation of schemes that cannot be executed, and in the contemplation of prospects which cannot be approached.

Such is the general dream in which we all slumber out our time; every man thinks the day coming, in which he shall be gratified with all his wishes, in which he shall leave all those competitors behind, who are now rejoicing like himself in the expectation of victory; the day is always coming to the servile in which they shall be powerful, to the obscure in which they shall be eminent, and to the deformed in which they shall be beautiful.

If any of my readers has looked with so little attention on the world about him, as to imagine this representation exaggerated beyond probability, let him reflect a little upon his own life; let him consider what were his hopes and prospects ten years ago, and what additions he then expected to be made by ten years to his happiness; those years are now elapsed; have they made good their promise that was extorted from them? have they advanced his fortune, enlarged his knowledge, or reformed his conduct, to the degree that was once expected? I am afraid every man that recollects his hopes, must confess his disappointment; and own that day has glided unprofitably after day, and that he is still at the same distance from the point of happiness.

With what consolations can those, who have thus miscarri-

ed in their chief design, elude the memory of their ill success; with what amusements can they pacify their discontent, after the loss of so large a portion of life? they can give themselves up again to the same delusions, they can form new schemes of airy gratifications, and fix another period of felicity; they can again resolve to trust the promise which they know will be broken, they can walk in a circle with their eyes shut, and persuade themselves to think that they go forward.

Of every great and complicated event, part depends upon causes out of our power, and part must be effected by vigour and perseverance. With regard to that which is styled in common language the work of chance, men will always find reasons for confidence or distrust, according to their different tempers or inclinations; and he that has been long accustomed to please himself with possibilities of fortuitous happiness, will not easily or willingly be reclaimed from his mistake. But the effects of human industry and skill are more easily subjected to calculation: whatever can be completed in a year, is divisible into parts, of which each may be performed in the compass of a day; he, therefore, that has passed the day without attention to the task assigned him, may be certain that the lapse of life has brought him no nearer to his object; for whatever idleness may expect from time, its produce will be only in proportion to the diligence with which it has been used. He that floats lazily down the stream, in pursuit of something born along by the same current, will find himself indeed moved forward; but unless he lays his hand to the oar, and increases his speed by his own labour, must be always at the same distance from that which he is following.

There have happened in every age some contingencies of unexpected and undeserved success, by which those who are determined to believe whatever favours their inclinations, have been encouraged to delight themselves with future advantages; they support confidence by considerations, of which the only proper use is to chase away despair: it is equally absurd to sit down in idleness because some have been enriched without labour, as to leap a precipice because some have fallen and escaped with life, or to put to sea in a storm because some have been driven from a wreck upon the coast to which they are bound.

We are all ready to confess, that belief ought to be proportioned to evidence or probability; let any man, therefore, compare the number of those who have been thus favoured by fortune, and of those who have failed of their expectations,

and he will easily determine, with what justness he has registered himself in the lucky catalogue.

But there is no need on these occasions for deep inquiries or laborious calculations; there is a far easier method of distinguishing the hopes of folly from those of reason, of finding the difference between prospects that exist before the eyes, and those that are only painted on a fond imagination. Tom Drowsy had accustomed himself to compute the profit of a darling project till he had no longer any doubt of its success; it was at last matured by close consideration, all the measures were accurately adjusted, and he wanted only five hundred pounds to become master of a fortune that might be envied by a director of a trading company. Tom was generous and grateful, and was resolved to recompense this small assistance with an ample fortune; he, therefore, deliberated for a time to whom amongst his friends he should declare his necessities; not that he suspected a refusal, but because he could not suddenly determine which of them would make the best use of riches, and was, therefore, most worthy of his favour. At last his choice was settled; and knowing that in order to borrow he must show the probability of repayment, he prepared for a minute and copious explanation of his project. But here the golden dream was at an end: he soon discovered the impossibility of imposing upon others the notions by which he had so long imposed upon himself; which way soever he turned his thoughts, impossibility and absurdity arose in opposition on every side; even credulity and prejudice were at last forced to give way, and he grew ashamed of crediting himself what shame would not suffer him to communicate to another.

To this test let every man bring his imaginations, before they have been too long predominant in his mind. Whatever is true will bear to be related, whatever is rational will endure to be explained; but when we delight to brood in secret over future happiness, and silently to employ our meditations upon schemes of which we are conscious that the bare mention would expose us to derision and contempt: we should then remember, that we are cheating ourselves by voluntary delusions; and giving up to the unreal mockeries of fancy, those hours in which solid advantages might be attained by sober thought and rational assiduity.

There is, indeed, so little certainty in human affairs, that the most cautious and severe examiner may be allowed to indulge some hopes which he cannot prove to be much favoured by probability; since after his utmost endeavours to ascertain events, he must often leave the issue in the hands of

chance. And so scanty is our present allowance of happiness, that in many situations life could scarcely be supported, if hope were not allowed to relieve the present hour by pleasures borrowed from futurity; and reanimate the languor of dejection to new efforts, by pointing to distant regions of felicity, which yet no resolution or perseverance shall ever reach.

But these, like all [illegible] ordials, though they may invigorate in a small [illegible] te in a greater; these pleasures like the rest [illegible] in certain circumstances, and to certain deg [illegible] useful in a due subserviency to nobler purpos[illegible] langerous and destructive when once they g [illegible] in the heart: to sooth the mind to tranquilli [illegible] when that hope is likely to deceive us, may b [illegible] ul; but to lull our faculties in a lethargy, is [illegible] le.

Vices and erro [illegible] ıy modified, according to the state of the minds to which they are incident; to indulge hope beyond the warrant of reason, is the failure alike of mean and elevated understandings, but its foundation and its effects are totally different: the man of high courage and great abilities is apt to place too much confidence in himself, and to expect from a vigorous exertion of his powers more than spirit or diligence can attain: between him and his wish he sees obstacles indeed, but he expects to overleap or break them, his mistaken ardour hurries him forward; and though perhaps he misses his end, he nevertheless obtains some collateral good, and performs something useful to mankind and honourable to himself.

The drone of timidity presumes likewise to hope, but without ground and without consequences; the bliss with which he solaces his hours, he always expects from others, though very often he knows not from whom: he folds his arms about him, and sits in expectation of some revolution in the state that shall raise him to greatness, or some golden shower that shall load him with wealth; he dozes away the day in musing upon the morrow; and at the end of life is roused from his dream only to discover that the time of action is past, and that he can now show his wisdom only by repentance.

NUMB. 74. SATURDAY, July 21, 1753.

Insanientis dum sapientiæ
Consultus erro. HOR.

I mist my end. and lost my way,
By crack-brain'd wisdom led astray.

TO THE ADVENTURER.

SIR—IT has long been charged by one part of mankind upon the other. that they will not take advice; that counsel and instruction are generally thrown away; and that, in defiance both of admonition and example, all claim the right to choose their own measures, and to regulate their own lives.

That there is something in advice very useful and salutary, seems to be equally confessed on all hands: since even those that reject it, allow for the most part that rejection to be wrong, but charge the fault upon the unskilful manner in which it is given; they admit the efficacy of the medicine, but abhor the nauseousness of the vehicle.

Thus mankind have gone on from century to century; some have been advising others how to act, and some have been teaching the advisers how to advise: yet very little alteration has been made in the world. As we must all by the law of nature enter life in ignorance, we must all make our way through it by the light of our own experience; and, for any security that advice has been yet able to afford, must endeavour after success at the hazard of miscarriage, and learn to do right by venturing to do wrong.

By advice I would not be understood to mean, the everlasting and invariable principles of moral and religious truth. from which no change of eternal circumstances can justify any deviation; but such directions as respect merely the prudential part of conduct, and which may be followed or neglected without any violation of essential duties.

It is, indeed, not so frequently to make us good as to make us wise, that our friends employ the officiousness of counsel: and among the rejectors of advice, who are mentioned by the grave and sententious with so much acrimony, you will not so often find the vitious and abandoned, as the pert and the petulent, the vivacious and the giddy.

As the great end of female education is to get a husband, this likewise is the general subject of female advice: and the dreadful denunciation against those volatile girls, who will not listen patiently to the lectures of wrinkled wisdom, is,

that they will die unmarried, or throw themselves away upon some worthless fellow, who will never be able to keep them a coach.

I being naturally of a ductile and easy temper, without strong desires or quick resentments, was always a favourite amongst the elderly ladies, because I never rebelled against seniority, nor could be charged with thinking myself wise before my time; b[illegible] opinion with submissive silence. professed n[illegible] learn from all who seemed inclined to teach r[illegible] grateful acknowledgments for precepts cont[illegible] other, and if any controversy arose, was ca[illegible] ith her who presided in the company.

Of this compliance I [illegible] found the advantage; for my aunt Matilda left me [illegible] rge addition to my fortune, for this reason chiefly, a[illegible] elf declared, because I was not above hearing good [illegible] but would sit from morning till night to be instructed, while my sister Sukey, who was a year younger than myself, and was, therefore, in greater want of information, was so much conceited of her own knowledge, that whenever the good lady in the ardour of benevolence reproved or instructed her, she would pout or titter, interrupt her with questions, or embarrass her with objections.

I had no design to supplant my sister by this complaisant attention: nor, when the consequence of my obsequiousness came to be known, did Sukey so much envy as despise me: I was, however, very well pleased with my success: and having received from the concurrent opinion of all mankind, a notion, that to be rich was to be great and happy, I thought I had obtained my advantages at an easy rate, and resolved to continue the same passive attention, since I found myself so powerfully recommended by it to kindness and esteem.

The desire of advising has a very extensive prevalence; and since advice cannot be given but to those that will hear it, a patient listener is necessary to the accommodation of all those who desire to be confirmed in the opinion of their wisdom; a patient listener, however, is not always to be had: the present age, whatever age is present, is so vitiated and disordered, that young people are readier to talk than to attend, and good counsel is only thrown away upon those who are full of their own perfections.

I was, therefore, in this scarcity of good sense, a general favourite; and seldom saw a day in which some sober matron did not invite me to her house, or take me out in her chariot for the sake of instructing me how to keep my character in this censorious age, how to conduct myself in the

time of courtship, how to stipulate for a settlement, how to manage a husband of every character, regulate my family, and educate my children.

We are all naturally credulous in our own favour. Having been so often caressed and applauded for my docility, I was willing to believe myself really enlightened by instruction, and completely qualified for the task of life. I did not doubt but I was entering the world with a mind furnished against all exigencies, with expedients to extricate myself from every difficulty, and sagacity to provide against every danger; I was, therefore, in haste to give some specimen of my prudence, and to show that this liberality of instruction had not been idly lavished upon a mind incapable of improvement.

My purpose, for why should I deny it? was like that of other women, to obtain a husband of rank and fortune superior to my own: and in this I had the concurrence of all those that had assumed the province of directing me. That the woman was undone who married below herself, was universally agreed: and though some ventured to assert, that the richer man ought invariably to be preferred and that money was a sufficient compensation for a defective ancestry; yet the majority declared warmly for a gentleman, and were of opinion that upstarts should not be encouraged.

With regard to other qualifications I had an irreconcileable variety of instructions. I was sometimes told, that deformity was no defect in a man: and that he who was not encouraged to intrigue by an opinion of his person, was more likely to value the tenderness of his wife: but a grave widow directed me to choose a man who might imagine himself agreeable to me, for that the deformed were always insupportably vigilant, and apt to sink into sullenness, or burst into rage, if they found their wife's eye wandering for a moment to a good face or a handsome shape.

They were, however, all unanimous in warning me, with repeated cautions, against all thoughts of union with a wit, as a being with whom no happiness could possibly be enjoyed: men of every other kind I was taught to govern, but a wit was an animal for whom no arts of taming had been yet discovered; the woman whom he could once get within his power, was considered as lost to all hope of dominion or of quiet: for he would detect artifice and defeat allurement; and if once he discovered any failure of conduct, would believe his own eyes, in defiance of tears, caresses and protestations.

In pursuance of these sage principles, I proceeded to form

my schemes; and while I was yet in the first bloom of youth, was taken out at an assembly by Mr. Frisk. I am afraid my cheeks glowed, and my eyes sparkled; for I observed the looks of all my superintendants fixed anxiously upon me; and I was next day cautioned against him from all hands, as a man of the most dangerous and formidable kind, who had writ verses to one lady, and then forsaken her, only because she could not r[illegible] lampooned another for no other fault than [illegible]r.

Having been [illegible]ed to obey, I ventured to dismiss Mr. Fr[illegible]lid not think me worth the labour of a lam[illegible] addressed by Mr. Sturdy, and congratulat[illegible]ds on the manors of which I was shortly t[illegible]rdy's conversation was so gross, that afte[illegible]ould endure him no longer; and incurred, [illegible]e censure of all my friends, who declared [illegible] greater than my prudence, and they feared it would be my fate at last to be wretched with a wit.

By a wit, however, I was never afterwards attacked, but lovers of every other class, or pretended lovers, I have often had; and, notwithstanding the advice constantly given me, to have no regard in my choice to my own inclinations, I could not forbear to discard some for vice, and some for rudeness. I was once loudly censured for refusing an old gentleman who offered an enormous jointure, and died of the phthisic a year after; and was so baited with incessant importunities, that I should have given my hand to Drone the stockjobber, had not the reduction of interest made him afraid of the expenses of matrimony.

Some, indeed, I was permitted to encourage; but miscarried of the main end, by treating them according to the rules of art which had been prescribed me. Altilis, an old maid, infused into me so much haughtiness and reserve, that some of my lovers withdrew themselves from my frown, and returned no more; others were driven away, by the demands of settlement which the widow Trapland directed me to make; and I have learned, by many experiments, that to ask advice is to lose opportunity.

I am, Sir,
Your humble Servant,
PERDITA.

Numb. 81. Tuesday, August 14, 1753.

Nil desperandum. Hor.

Avaunt despair.

I have sometimes heard it disputed in conversation, whether it be more laudable or desirable, that a man should think too highly or too meanly of himself: it is on all hands agreed to be best, that he should think rightly: but since a fallible being will always make some deviations from exact rectitude, it is not wholly useless to inquire towards which side it is safer to decline.

The prejudices of mankind seem to favour him who errs by underrating his own powers; he is considered as a modest and harmless member of society, not likely to break the peace by competition, to endeavour after such splendour of reputation as may dim the lustre of others, or to interrupt any in the enjoyment of themselves; he is no man's rival, and, therefore, may be every man's friend.

The opinion which a man entertains of himself ought to be distinguished, in order to an accurate discussion of this question, as it relates to persons or to things. To think highly of ourselves in comparison with others, to assume by our own authority that precedence which none is willing to grant, must be always invidious and offensive; but to rate our powers high in proportion to things, and imagine ourselves equal to great undertakings, while we leave others in possession of the same abilities, cannot with equal justice provoke censure.

It must be confessed that self-love may dispose us to decide too hastily in our own favour; but who is hurt by the mistake? If we are incited by this vain opinion to attempt more than we can perform, ours is the labour, and ours is the disgrace.

But he that dares to think well of himself, will not always prove to be mistaken; and the good effects of his confidence will then appear in great attempts and great performances; if he should not fully complete his design, he will at least advance it so far as to leave an easier task for him that succeeds him: and even though he should wholly fail, he will fail with honour.

But from the opposite error, from torpid despondency can come no advantage: it is the frost of the soul which binds up all its powers, and congeals life in perpetual sterility. He

that has no hopes of success, will make no attempts; and where nothing is attempted, nothing can be done.

Every man, should, therefore, endeavour to maintain in himself a favourable opinion of the powers of the human mind; which are perhaps, in every man, greater than they appear, and might, by diligent cultivation, be exalted to a degree beyond what their [illegible] ume to believe. There is scarce any man [illegible] self able, at the instigation of necessity, to [illegible] of leisure and deliberation he would have [illegible] le; and some of our species have sign [illegible] by such achievements, as prove that ther [illegible] ove human hope.

It has been th [illegible] tions to preserve, by some public monumen [illegible] those who have served their country by grea [illegible] s the same reason for continuing or reviving the name of those, whose extensive abilities have dignified humanity. An honest emulation may be alike excited; and the philosopher's curiosity may be inflamed by a catalogue of the works of Boyle or Bacon, as Themistocles was kept awake by the trophies of Miltiades.

Among the favourites of nature that have from time to time appeared in the world, enriched with various endowments and contrarieties of excellence, none seems to have been more exalted above the common rate of humanity, than the man known about two centuries ago by the appellation of the Admirable Crichton; of whose history, whatever we may suppress as surpassing credibility, yet we shall, upon incontestible authority, relate enough to rank him among prodigies.

"Virtue," says Virgil, "is better accepted when it comes in a pleasing form:" the person of Crichton was eminently beautiful; but his beauty was consistent with such activity and strength, that in fencing he would spring at one bound the length of twenty feet upon his antagonist; and he used the sword in either hand with such force and dexterity, that scarce any one had courage to engage him.

Having studied at St. Andrew's in Scotland, he went to Paris in his twenty-first year, and affixed on the gate of the college of Navarre a kind of challenge to the learned of that university to dispute with him on a certain day: offering to his opponents, whoever they should be, the choice of ten languages, and of all the faculties and sciences. On the day appointed three thousand auditors assembled, when four doctors of the church and fifty masters appeared against him; and one of his antagonists confesses, that the doctors were defeated; that he gave proofs of knowledge above the reach of man; and that a hundred years passed without food or

sleep, would not be sufficient for the attainment of his learning. After a disputation of nine hours he was presented by the president and professors with a diamond and a purse of gold, and dismissed with repeated acclamations.

From Paris he went away to Rome, where he made the same challenge, and had in the presence of the pope and cardinals the same success. Afterwards he contracted at Venice an acquaintance with Aldus Manutius, by whom he was introduced to the learned of that city: then visited Padua, where he engaged in another public disputation, beginning his performance with an extemporal poem in praise of the city and the assembly then present, and concluding with an oration equally unpremeditated in commendation of ignorance.

He afterwards published another challenge, in which he declared himself ready to detect the errors of Aristotle and all his commentators, either in the common forms of logic, or in any which his antagonists should propose of a hundred different kinds of verse.

These acquisitions of learning, however stupendous, were not gained at the expense of any pleasure which youth generally indulges, or by the omission of any accomplishment in which it becomes a gentleman to excel: he practised in great perfection the arts of drawing and painting, he was an eminent performer in both vocal and instrumental music, he danced with uncommon gracefulness, and on the day after his disputation at Paris exhibited his skill in horsemanship before the court of France, where at a public match of tilting, he bore away the ring upon his lance fifteen times together.

He excelled likewise in domestic games of less dignity and reputation; and in the interval between his challenge and disputation at Paris, he spent so much of his time at cards, dice, and tennis, that a lampoon was fixed upon the gate of the Sorbonne, directing those that would see this monster of erudition, to look for him at the tavern.

So extensive was his acquaintance with life and manners, that in an Italian comedy composed by himself, and exhibited before the court of Mantua, he is said to have personated fifteen different characters; in all which he might succeed without great difficulty, since he had such power of retention, that once hearing an oration of an hour, he would repeat it exactly, and in the recital follow the speaker through all his variety of tone and gesticulation.

Nor was his skill in arms less than in learning, or his courage inferior to his skill: there was a prize-fighter at Mantua, who travelling about the world, according to the

barbarous custom of that age, as a general challenger, had defeated the most celebrated masters in many parts of Europe; and in Mantua, where he then resided, had killed three that appeared against him. The duke repented that he had granted him his protection; when Crichton looking on his sanguinary success with indignation, offered to stake fifteen hundred pistoles, and mount the stage against him. The duke, with some [illegible] nted, and on the day fixed the combatants [illegible] eapon seems to have been single rapier, [illegible] ewly introduced in Italy. The prize-fight[illegible] great violence and fierceness, and Cric[illegible] mself calmly to ward his passes, and suffe[illegible] his vigour by his own fury. Crichton then h[illegible] nt; and pressed upon him with such force [illegible] e thurst him thrice through the body, and s[illegible] then divided the prize he had won among m[illegible] husbands had been killed.

The death of this wonderful man I should be willing to conceal, did I not know that every reader will inquire curiously after that fatal hour, which is common to all human beings, however distinguished from each other by nature or by fortune.

The duke of Mantua having received so many proofs of his various merit, made him tutor to his son Vicentio di Gonzaga, a prince of loose manners and turbulent disposition. On this occasion it was, that he composed the comedy in which he exhibited so many different characters with exact propriety. But his honour was of short continuance; for as he was one night, in the time of Carnival, rambling about the streets, with his guitar in his hand, he was attacked by six men masked. Neither his courage nor skill in this exigence deserted him; he opposed them with such activity and spirit, that he soon dispersed them, and disarmed their leader, who throwing off his mask, discovered himself to be the prince his pupil. Crichton falling on his knees, took his own sword by the point, and presented it to the prince; who immediately seized it, and instigated, as some say, by jealousy, according to others, only by drunken fury and brutal resentment, thurst him through the heart.

Thus was the admirable Crichton brought into that state, in which he could excel the meanest of mankind only by a few empty honours paid to his memory: the court of Mantua [illegible] tified their esteem by a public mourning, the contempor[illegible] wits were profuse of their encomiums, and the palaces [illegible] Italy were adorned with pictures, representing him on ho[illegible] back with a lance in one hand and a book in the other.

NUMB. 84. SATURDAY, August 25, 1753.

——— *Tolle periculum,*
Jam vaga prosiliet frænis natura remotis. HOR.

But take the danger and the shame away,
And vagrant nature bounds upon her prey. FRANCIS.

TO THE ADVENTURER.

SIR—IT has been observed, I think, by Sir William Temple, and after him by almost every other writer, that England affords a greater variety of characters than the rest of the world. This is ascribed to the liberty prevailing amongst us, which gives every man the privilege of being wise or foolish his own way, and preserves him from the necessity of hypocrisy, or the servility of imitation.

That the position itself is true, I am not completely satisfied. To be nearly acquainted with the people of different countries can happen to very few; and in life, as in every thing else beheld at a distance, there appears an even uniformity: the petty discriminations which diversify the natural character, are not discoverable but by a close inspection; we, therefore, find them most at home, because there we have most opportunities of remarking them. Much less am I convinced, that this peculiar diversification, if it be real, is the consequence of peculiar liberty; for where is the government to be found that superintends individuals with so much vigilance, as not to leave their private conduct without restraint? Can it enter into a reasonable mind to imagine that men of every other nation are not equally masters of their own time or houses with ourselves, and equally at liberty to be parsimonious or profuse, frolic or sullen, abstinent or luxurious? Liberty is certainly necessary to the full play of predominant humours; but such liberty is to be found alike under the government of the many or the few, in monarchies or in commonwealths.

How readily the predominant passion snatches an interval of liberty, and how fast it expands itself, when the weight of restraint is taken away, I had lately an opportunity to discover, as I took a journey into the country in a stage-coach: which, as every journey is a kind of adventure, may be very properly related to you, though I can display no such extraordinary assembly as Cervantes has collected at Don Quixote's inn.

In a stage-coach the passengers are for the most part wholly unknown to one another, and without expectation of ever

meeting again when their journey is at an end; one should, therefore, imagine, that it was of little importance to any of them, what conjectures the rest should form concerning him. Yet so it is, that as all think themselves secure from detection, all assume that character of which they are most desirous, and on no occasion is the general ambition of superiority more apparently indulged.

On the day c[illegible] the twilight of the morning, I ascended [illegible] hree men and two women, my fellow trave[illegible] to observe the affected elevation of mien [illegible] ne entered, and the supercilious civility [illegible] paid their compliments to each other. W[illegible] ony was despatched, we sat silent for a long [illegible] d in collecting importance into our faces, a[illegible] o strike reverence and submission into our [illegible]

It is always ob[illegible] nce propagates itself, and that the longer talk has been su[illegible] ended, the more difficult it is to find any thing to say. We began now to wish for conversation; but no one seemed inclined to descend from his dignity, or first propose a topic of discourse. At last a corpulent gentleman, who had equipped himself for this expedition, with a scarlet surtout and a large hat with a broad lace, drew out his watch, looked on it in silence, and then held it dangling at his finger. This was, I suppose, understood by all the company as an invitation to ask the time of the day, but nobody appeared to heed his overture: and his desire to be talking so far overcame his resentment, that he let us know of his own accord that it was past five, and that in two hours we should be at breakfast.

His condescension was thrown away; we continued all obdurate; the ladies held up their heads; I amused myself with watching their behaviour; and of the other two, one seemed to employ himself in counting the trees as we drove by them, the other drew his hat over his eyes and counterfeited a slumber. The man of benevolence, to show that he was not depressed by our neglect, hummed a tune and beat time upon his snuff-box.

Thus universally displeased with one another, and not much delighted with ourselves, we came at last to the little inn appointed for our repast; and all began at once to recompense themselves for the constraint of silence, by innumerable questions and orders to the people that attended. At last, what every one had called for was got, or dec[illegible] impossible to be got at that time, and we were persuaded [illegible] round the same table; when the gentleman in the red su[illegible]

looked again upon his watch, told us we had half an hour to spare, but he was sorry to see so little merriment among us; that all fellow travellers were for the time upon the level, and that it was always his way to make himself one of the company. "I remember," says he "it was on just such a morning as this, that I and my Lord Mumble and the Duke of Tenterden were out upon a ramble: we called at a little house, as it might be this; and my landlady, I warrant you, not suspecting to whom she was talking, was so jocular and facetious, and made so many merry answers to our questions, that we were all ready to burst with laughter. At last the good woman happening to overhear me whisper the duke and call him by his title, was so surprised and confounded, that we could scarcely get a word from her; and the duke never met me from that day to this, but he talks of the little house, and quarrels with me for terrifying the landlady."

He had scarcely time to congratulate himself on the veneration which this narrative must have procured from the company, when one of the ladies having reached out for a plate on a distant part of the table, began to remark, "the inconveniences of travelling, and the difficulty which they who never sat at home without a great number of attendants, found in performing for themselves such offices as the road required: but that people of quality often travelled in disguise, and might be generally known from the vulgar by their condescension to poor inn-keepers, and the allowance which they made for any defect in their entertainment; that for her part, while people were civil and meant well, it was never her custom to find fault, for one was not to expect upon a journey all that one enjoyed at one's own house."

A general emulation seemed now to be excited. One of the men, who had hitherto said nothing, called for the last newspaper: and having perused it awhile with deep pensiveness, "It is impossible," says he, "for any man to guess how to act with regard to the stocks: last week it was the general opinion that they would fall; and I sold out twenty thousand pounds in order to a purchase: they have now risen unexpectedly; and I make no doubt but at my return to London I shall risk thirty thousand pounds among them again."

A young man, who had hitherto distinguished himself only by the vivacity of his looks, and a frequent diversion of his eyes from one object to another, upon this closed his snuff-box, and told us, that "he had a hundred times talked with the chancellor and the judges on the subject of the stocks; that for his part he did not pretend to be well acquainted with the principles on which they were established, but had always

heard them reckoned pernicious to trade, uncertain in their produce, and unsolid in their foundation; and that he had been advised by three judges, his most intimate friends, never to venture his money in the funds, but to put it out upon land security, till he could light upon an estate in his own country."

It might be expected, that upon these glimpses of latent dignity, we sho[illegible] to look round us with veneration; and [illegible] the princes of romance, when the encha[illegible]ses them is dissolved, and they discover th[illegible]ther; yet it happened that none of these h[illegible]pression on the company; every one was [illegible]ed of endeavouring to impose false app[illegible]rest; all continued their haughtiness in [illegible]eir claims; and all grew every hour mo[illegible]ey found their representations of them[illegible]

Thus we trave[illegible] with malevolence perpetually increasing, and without any endeavour but to outvie each other in superciliousness and neglect; and when any two of us could separate ourselves for a moment, we vented our indignation at the sauciness of the rest.

At length the journey was at an end; and time and chance, that strip of all disguises, have discovered, that the intimate of lords and dukes is a nobleman's butler, who has furnished a shop with the money he has saved; the man who deals so largely in the funds, is the clerk of a broker in 'Change-alley; the lady who so carefully concealed her quality, keeps a cook-shop behind the Exchange; and the young man, who is so happy in the friendship of the judges, engrosses and transcribes for bread in a garret of the Temple. Of one of the women only I could make no disadvantageous detection, because she had assumed no character, but accommodated herself to the scene before her without any struggle for distinction or superiority.

I could not forbear to reflect on the folly of practising a fraud, which, as the event showed, had been already practised too often to succeed, and by the success of which no advantage could have been obtained; of assuming a character, which was to end with the day; and of claiming upon false pretences honours which must perish with the breath that paid them.

But, Mr. Adventurer, let not those who laugh at me and my companions, think this folly confined to a stage coach. Every man in the journey of life takes the same advantage of the ignorance of his fellow travellers, disguises himself in counter-

feited merit, and hears those praises with complacency which his conscience reproaches him for accepting. Every man deceives himself, while he thinks he is deceiving others; and forgets that the time is at hand when every illusion shall cease, when fictitious excellence shall be torn away, and *all* must be shown to *all* in their real estate.

I am, sir,

Your humble servant,

VIATOR.

Numb. 85. Tuesday, August 28, 1753.

Qui cupit optatam cursu contingere metam,
Multa tulit fecitque puer. Hor.

The youth, who hopes th' Olympic prize to gain,
All arts must try, and every toil sustain. Francis.

It is observed by Bacon, that "reading makes a full man, conversation a ready man, and writing an exact man."

As Bacon attained to degrees of knowledge scarcely ever reached by any other man, the directions which he gives for study have certainly a just claim to our regard; for who can teach an art with so great authority, as he that has practised it with undisputed success?

Under the protection of so great a name, I shall therefore, venture to inculcate to my ingenious contemporaries, the necessity of reading, the fitness of consulting other understandings than their own, and of considering the sentiments and opinions of those who, however neglected in the present age, had in their own times, and many of them a long time afterwards, such reputation for knowledge and acuteness as will scarcely ever be attained by those that despise them.

An opinion has of late been, I know not how, propagated among us, that libraries are filled only with useless lumber; that men of parts stand in need of no assistance; and that to spend life in poring upon books, is only to imbibe prejudices, to obstruct and embarrass the powers of nature, to cultivate memory at the expense of judgment, and to bury reason under a chaos of indigested learning.

Such is the talk of many who think themselves wise, and of some who are thought wise by others; of whom part probably believe their own tenets, and part may be justly sus-

pected of endeavouring to shelter their ignorance in multitudes, and of wishing to destroy that reputation which they have no hopes to share. It will, I believe, be found invariably true, that learning was never decried by any learned man; and what credit can be given to those, who venture to condemn that which they do not know?

If reason has the power ascribed to it by its advocates, if so much is to be discovered by attention and meditation, it is hard to believe [illegible] lions, equally participating of the bounties [illegible] selves, have been for ages upon ages med[illegible] the wits of the present time expect the reg[illegible] which will then inherit the reason which i[illegible] rior to instruction, surely they may allo[illegible] instructed by the reason of former genera[illegible] efore, an author declares, that he has bee[illegible] ing from the writings of his predecessor[illegible] ation has been lately made, nothing but a [illegible] ance unpardonable in the greatest human understanding, can hinder him from perceiving that he is raising prejudices against his own performance; for with what hopes of success can he attempt that in which greater abilities have hitherto miscarried? or with what peculiar force does he suppose himself invigorated, that difficulties hitherto invincible should give way before him.

Of those whom Providence has qualified to make any additions to human knowledge, the number is extremely small; and what can be added by each single mind, even of this superior class, is very little: the greatest part of mankind must owe all their knowledge, and all must owe far the larger part of it, to the information of others. To understand the works of celebrated authors, to comprehend their systems, and retain their reasonings, is a task more than equal to common intellects; and he is by no means to be accounted useless or idle, who has stored his mind with acquired knowledge, and can detail it occasionally to others who have less leisure or weaker abilities.

Persius has justly observed, that knowledge is nothing to him who is not known by others to possess it: to the scholar himself it is nothing with respect either to honour or advantage, for the world cannot reward those qualities which are concealed from it; with respect to others it is nothing, becau it affords no help to ignorance or error.

It is with justice, therefore, that in an accomplished racter, Horace unites just sentiments with the power of pressing them; and he that has once accumulated lea

is next to consider, how he shall most widely diffuse and most agreeably impart it.

A ready man is made by conversation. He that buries himself among his manuscripts "besprent," as Pope expresses it, "with learned dust," and wears out his days and nights in perpetual research and solitary meditation, is too apt to lose in his elocution what he adds to his wisdom; and when he comes into the world, to appear overloaded with his own notions, like a man armed with weapons which he cannot wield. He has no facility of inculcating his speculations, of adapting himself to the various degrees of intellect which the accidents of conversation will present: but will talk to most unintelligibly, and to all unpleasantly.

I was once present at the lectures of a profound philosopher, a man really skilled in the science which he professed, who having occasion to explain the terms *opacum* and *pellucidum*, told us, after some hesitation, that *opacum* was, as one might say, *opake*, and that *pellucidum* signified *pellucid*. Such was the dexterity with which this learned reader facilitated to his auditors the intricacies of science; and so true is it, that a man may know what he cannot teach.

Boerhaave complains, that the writers who have treated of chemistry before him, are useless to the greater part of students, because they presuppose their readers to have such degrees of skill as are not often to be found. Into the same error are all men apt to fall, who have familiarized any subject to themselves in solitude: they discourse as if they thought every other man had been employed in the same inquiries: and expect that short hints and obscure allusions will produce in others the same train of ideas which they excite in themselves.

Nor is this the only inconvenience which the man of study suffers from a recluse life. When he meets with an opinion that pleases him, he catches it up with eagerness; looks only after such arguments as tend to his confirmation; or spares himself the trouble of discussion, and adopts it with very little proof; indulges it long without suspicion, and in time unites it to the general body of his knowledge, and treasures it up among incontestible truths: but when he comes into the world among men, who, arguing upon dissimilar principles, have been led to different conclusions, and being placed in various situations, view the same object on many sides; he finds his darling position attacked, and himself in no condition to defend it: having thought always in one train, he is in the state of a man, who, having fenced with the same master, is perplexed and amazed by a new posture of his antagonist;

he is entan led in unexpected difficulties, he is harassed by sudden objections, he is unprovided with solutions or replies; his surprise impedes his natural powers of reasoning, his thoughts are scattered and confounded, and he gratifies the pride of airy petulance with an easy victory.

It is difficult to imagine with what obstinacy truths which one mind per uition, will be rejected by another; an must be practised to procure admissi nt propositions into understandings fri , or hardened against them by accidenta scarcely be conceived, how frequenly, in us controversies, the dull will be subtle d; how often stupidity will elude the fo involving itself in its own gloom; and mu will weave artful fallacies, which reason can scarcely find means to disentangle.

In these encounters the learning of the recluse usually fails him: nothing but long habit and frequent experiments can confer the power of changing a position into various forms, presenting it in different points of view, connecting it with known and granted truths, fortifying it with intelligible arguments, and illustrating it by apt similitutes; and he, therefore, that has collected his knowledge in solitude, must learn its application by mixing with mankind.

But while the various opportunities of conversation invite us to try every mode of argument, and every art of recommending our sentiments, we are frequently betrayed to the use of such as are not in themselves strictly defensible: a man heated in talk, and eager of victory, takes advantage of the mistakes or ignorance of his adversary, lays hold of concessions to which he knows he has no right, and urges proofs likely to prevail in his opponent, though he knows himself that they have no force: thus the severity of reason is relaxed, many topics are accumulated, but without just arrangement or distinction; we learn to satisfy ourselves with such ratiocination as silences others, and seldom recall to a close examination, that discourse which has gratified our vanity with victory and applause.

Some caution, therefore, must be used, lest copiousness and facility be made less valuable by inaccuracy and confusion. To fix the thoughts by writing, and subject them to frequ examinations and reviews, is the best method of enabling mind to detect its own sophisms, and keep it on guard agai the fallacies which it practises on others: in conversation naturally diffuse our thoughts, and in writing we cont

them; method is the excellence of writing, and unconstraint the grace of conversation.

To read, write, and converse in due proportions, is therefore the business of a man of letters. For all these there is not often equal opportunity; excellence, therefore, is not often attainable; and most men fail in one or other of the ends proposed, and are full without readiness, or ready without exactness. Some deficiency must be forgiven all, because all are men: and more must be allowed to pass uncensured in the greater part of the world, because none can confer upon himself abilities, and few have the choice of situations proper for the improvement of those which nature has bestowed: it is however, reasonable, to have perfection in our eye; that we may always advance towards it, though we know it never can be reached.

Numb. 92. Saturday, September 22, 1753.

Cum tabulis animum censoris sumet honesti. Hor.

Bold be the critic, zealous to his trust,
Like the firm judge inexorably just.

TO THE ADVENTURER.

Sir—In the papers of criticism which you have given to the public, I have remarked a spirit of candour and love of truth, equally remote from bigotry and captiousness; a just distribution of praise amongst the ancients and the moderns: a sober deference to reputation long established, without a blind adoration of antiquity; and a willingness to favour later performances, without a light or puerile fondness for novelty.

I shall, therefore, venture to lay before you, such observations as have risen to my mind in the consideration of Virgil's pastorals, without any inquiry how far my sentiments deviate from established rules or common opinions.

If we survey the ten pastorals in a general view, it will be found that Virgil can derive from them very little claim to the praise of an inventor. To search into the antiquity of this kind of poetry, is not my present purpose; that it has long subsisted in the east, the Sacred Writings sufficiently inform us; and we may conjecture, with great probability, that it was sometimes the devotion, and sometimes the enter-

tainment of the first generations of mankind. Theocritus united elegance with simplicity; and taught his shepherds to sing with so much ease and harmony, that his countrymen, despairing to excel, forbore to imitate him; and the Greeks, however vain or ambitious, left him in quiet possession of the garlands which the wood nymphs had bestowed upon him.

Virgil, however, taking advantage of another language, ventured to co[illegible]ilian bard; he has written with greater [illegible]n, and elevation of senti-ment: but as [illegible]is performances was more, than simplicit[illegible] perhaps, where he excels Theocritus, he [illegible]is superiority by deviating from the past[illegible] performing what Theocritus never atter[illegible]

Yet, though [illegible]ay to Theocritus the honour which is a[illegible]ginal author, I am far from intending to d[illegible] whom Horace justly declares, that the rural muses have appropriated to him their elegance and sweetness, and who, as he copied Theocritus in his design, has resembled him likewise in his success; for, if we except Calphurnius, an obscure author of the lower ages, I know not that a single pastoral was written after him by any poet, till the revival of literature.

But though his general merit has been universally acknowledged, I am far from thinking all the productions of his rural Thalia equally excellent: there is, indeed, in all his pastorals, a strain of versification which it is vain to seek in any other poet; but if we except the first and the tenth, they seem liable either wholly or in part to considerable objections.

The second, though we shall forget the great charge against it, which I am afraid can never be refuted, might, I think, have perished, without any diminution of the praise of its author; for I know not that it contains one affecting sentiment or pleasing description, or one passage that strikes the imagination or awakens the passions.

The third contains a contest between two shepherds, begun with a quarrel of which some particulars might well be spared, carried on with sprightlinsss and elegance, terminated at last in a reconciliation: but, surely, whether the invectives with waich they attack each other be true or false, they are too much degraded from the dignity of pastora[illegible] cence; and instead of rejoicing that they are both [illegible] ous, I should not have grieved could they have been [illegible] feated.

The poem to Pollio is, indeed, of another kind; it i[illegible]

with images at once splendid and pleasing, and is elevated with grandeur of language worthy of the first of Roman poets; but I am not able to reconcile myself to the disproportion, between the performance and the occasion that produced it: that the golden age should return because Pollio had a son, appears so wild a fiction, that I am ready to suspect the poet of having written, for some other purpose, what he took this opportunity of producing to the public.

The fifth contains a celebration of Daphnis, which has stood to all succeeding ages as the model of pastoral elegies. To deny praise to a performance which so many thousands have laboured to imitate, would be to judge with too little deference for the opinion of mankind: yet whoever shall read it with impartiality, will find that most of the images are of the mythological kind, and therefore, easily invented; and that there are few sentiments of rational praise or natural lamentation.

In the Silenus he again rises to the dignity of philosophic sentiments, and heroic poetry. The address to Varus is eminently beautiful: but since the compliment paid to Callus fixes the transaction to his own time, the fiction of Silenus seems injudicious: nor has any sufficient reason yet been found, to justify his choice of those fables that make the subject of the song.

The seventh exhibits another contest of the tuneful shepherds: and, surely, it is not without some reproach to his inventive power, that of ten pastorals Virgil has written two upon the same plan. One of the shepherds now gains an acknowledged victory, but without any apparent superiority, and the reader, when he sees the prize adjudged, is not able to discover how it was deserved.

Of the eight pastoral, so little is properly the work of Virgil, that he has no claim to other praise or blame than that of a translator.

Of the ninth, it is scarce possible to discover the design or tendency; it is said, I know not upon what authority, to have been composed from fragments of other poems; and except a few lines in which the author touches upon his own misfortunes, there is nothing that seems appropriated to any time or place, or of which any other use can be discovered than to fill up the poem.

The first and the tenth pastorals, whatever be determined of the rest, are sufficient to place their author above the reach of rivalry. The complaint of Gallus disappointed in his love, is full of such sentiments as disappointed love naturally produces; his wishes are wild, his resentment is tender, and

his purposes are inconstant. In the genuine language of despair, he sooths himself awhile with the pity that shall be paid him after his death.

——— Tamen cantabitis, Arcades, inquit,
Montibus hæc vestris: soli cantare periti
Arcades. O mihi tum quam molliter ossa quiescant
Vestra meos olim si fistula dicat amores!

——— Y
Ye best art s!
Tune your r rocks my woes,
So shall my pose.
O that your een mine;
To feed the reading vine.

WARTON.

Discontented condition, and desirous to be any thing wishes himself one of the shepherds. He idea of rural tranquillity; but soon discovers how much happier he should be in these happy regions, with Lycoris at his side:

Hic gelidi fontes, hic mollia prata, Lycori:
Hic nemus; hic ipso tecum consumerer ævo.
Nunc insanus amor duci me Martis in armis;
Tela inter media, atque adversos detinet hostes.
Tu procul a patria (nec sit mihi credere) tantum
Alpinas, ah dura, nives, et frigore Rheni
Me sine sola vides. Ah te ne frigora lædant!
Ah tibi ne teneras glacies secet aspera plantas!

Here cooling fountains roll through flow'ry meads,
Here woods, Lycoris, lift their verdant heads;
Here could I wear my careless life away,
And in thy arms insensibly decay.
Instead of that, me frantic love detains
'Mid foes and dreadful darts, and bloody plains:
While you..... and can my soul the tale believe
Far from your country, lonely wand'ring leave
Me, me your lover, barbarous fugitive!
Seek the rough Alps where snows eternal shine,
And joyless borders on the frozen Rhine.
Ah! may no cold e'er blast my dearest maid,
Nor pointed ice thy tender feet invade!

WARTON.

He then turns his thoughts on every side in quest of something that may solace or amuse him: he proposes happiness to himself, first in one scene and then in another; and at last finds that nothing will satisfy.

Jam neque Hamadryades rurum, nec carmina nobis
Ipsa placent: ipsa rurum concedite sylvæ.

[redacted]

Non illum nostri possunt mutare labores;
Nec si frigoribus mediis Hebrumque bibamus,
Scithoniasque nives hyemis subeamus aquosæ:
Nec si, cum moriens alta liber aret in ulmo,
Æthiopum versemus oves sub sidere Cancri,
Omnia vincit amor; et nos cedamus amori.

But now again no more the woodland maids,
For pastoral songs delight—Farewell, ye shades—
No toils of ours the cruel god can change,
Though lost in frozen deserts we should range;
Though we should drink where chilling Hebrus flows,
Endure bleak winter's blasts, and Thracian snows:
Or on hot India's plains our flocks should feed,
Where the parch'd elm declines his sickening head
Beneath fierce-glowing Cancer's fiery beams,
Far from cool breezes and refreshing streams.
Love o'er all maintains resistless sway,
And let us love's all conquering power obey.

WARTON.

But notwithstanding the excellence of the tenth pastoral, I cannot forbear to give the preference to the first, which is equally natural, and more diversified. The complaint of the shepherd, who saw his old companion at ease in the shade, while himself was driving his little flock he knew not whither, is such as, with variation of circumstances, misery always utters at the sight of prosperity.

Nos patriæ fines, et dulcia linquimus arva;
Nos patriam fugimus; tu, Tityre, lentus in umbra,
Formosam resonare doces Amarillida sylvas.

We leave our country's bounds, our much-lov'd plains
We from our country fly, unhappy swains!
You, Tityrus, in the groves at leisure laid,
Teach Amaryllis' name to every shade. WARTON.

His account of the difficulties of his journey, gives a very tender image of pastoral distress.

——— *En ipse capellas*
Protenus æger ago: hanc etiam vix, Tityre, duco:
Hic inter densas corylos modo namque gemellos,
Spem gregis, ah! silice in nuda connixa reliquit.

And lo! sad partner of the general care,
Weary and faint I drive my goats afar!
While scarcely this my leading hand sustains,
Tir'd with the way, and recent from her pains;
For mid yon tangled hazels as we past,
On the bare flints her hapless twins she cast,
The hopes and promise of my ruin'd fold! WARTON.

The description of Virgil's happiness in his little farm, combines almost all the images of rural pleasure; and he, therefore, that can read it with indifference, has no sense of pastoral poetry:

Fortunate senex, ergo tua rura manebunt,
Et tibi magna satis; quam vis lapis omnia nudus.
Limosoque [illegible] *o,*
Non insuet [illegible] *fœtas,*
Nec mala [illegible] *nt.*
Fortunate [illegible] *,*
Et fontes sa [illegible] *um,*
Hinc tibi, q [illegible] *sepes,*
Hyblæis cap [illegible]
Sæpe levi so [illegible] *re.*
Hinc altâ su [illegible] *auras;*
Nec tamen [illegible] *lumbes,*
Nec gemere [illegible] *lmo.*

Happy old [illegible] 's restored,
Enough for [illegible] gal board.
What tho' rough stones the [illegible] ed soil o'erspread,
Or marshy bulrush rear its wat'ry head,
No foreign food thy teeming ewes shall fear,
No touch contagious spread its influence here.
Happy old man! here 'mid th' accustom'd streams
And sacred springs, you'll shun the scorching beams;
While from yon willow-fence, thy picture's bound,
The bees that suck their flow'ry stores around,
Shall sweetly mingle, with the whispering boughs,
Their lulling murmurs, and invite repose:
While from steep rocks, the pruner's song is heard;
Nor the soft-cooing dove, thy fav'rite bird,
Meanwhile shall cease to breathe her melting strain,
Nor turtles from th' aërial elm to 'plain. WARTON.

It may be observed, that these two poems were produced by events that really happened; and may, therefore, be of use to prove, that we can always feel more than we can imagine, and that the most artful fiction must give way to truth.

I am, Sir,
Your humble Servant,
DUBIUS.

NUMB. 95. TUESDAY, October 2, 1753.

———*Dulcique animos novitate tenebo.* OVID.

And with sweet novelty your soul detain.

It is often charged upon writers, that with all their pretensions to genius and discoveries, they do little more than

copy one another; and that compositions intruded upon the world with the pomp of novelty, contain only tedious repetitions of common sentiments, or at best exhibit a transposition of known images, and give a new appearance to truth only by some slight difference of dress and decoration.

The allegation of resemblance between authors, is indisputably true; but the image of plagiarism, which is raised upon it, is not to be allowed with equal readiness. A coincidence of sentiment may easily happen without any communication, since there are many occasions in which all reasonable men will nearly think alike. Writers of all ages have had the same sentiments, because they have in all ages had the same objects of speculation; the interests and passions, the virtues and vices of mankind, have been diversified in different times, only by unessential and casual varieties; and we must, therefore, expect in the works of all those who attempt to describe them, such a likeness as we find in the pictures of the same person drawn in different periods of his life.

It is necessary, therefore, that before an author be charged with plagiarism, one of the most reproachful though, perhaps, not the most atrocious of literary crimes, the subject on which he treats should be carefully considered. We do not wonder, that historians, relating the same facts, agree in their narration; or that authors, delivering the elements of science advance the same theorems, and lay down the same definitions; yet it is not wholly without use to mankind, that books are multiplied, and different authors lay out their labours on the same subject; for there will always be some reason why one should on particular occasions or to particular persons, be preferable to another; some will be clear where others are obscure, some will please by their style and others by their method, some by their embellishments and others by their simplicity, some by closeness and others by diffusion.

The same indulgence is to be shown to the writers of morality: right and wrong are immutable: and those, therefore, who teach us to distinguish them, if they all teach us right, must agree with one another. The relations of social life, and the duties resulting from them, must be the same at all times and in all nations: some petty differences may be, indeed, produced, by forms of government or arbitrary customs; but the general doctrine can receive no alteration.

Yet it is not to be desired, that morality should be consi-

dered as interdicted to all future writers: men will always be tempted to deviate from their duty, and will, therefore, always want a monitor to recall them; and a new book often seizes the attention of the public, without any other claim than that it is new. There is likewise in composition, as in other things, a perpetual vicissitude of fashion; and truth is recommended at one time to regard, by appearances which at another would [illegible]; the author, therefore, who has judgment [illegible] of his contemporaries, and skill to gratif[illegible] ays an opportunity to deserve well of [illegible] ng instruction to them in a grateful vehic[illegible]

There are li[illegible] of composition, by which a moralist may [illegible] of an original writer: he may familiari[illegible] logues after the manner of the ancients, [illegible] series of syllogistic arguments; he ma[illegible] ine by seriousness and solemnity, or enliven it by sprightliness and gaiety; he may deliver his sentiments in naked precepts, or illustrate them by historical examples; he may detain the studious by the artful concatenation of a continued discourse, or relieve the busy by short strictures, and unconnected essays.

To excel in any of these forms of writing will require a particular cultivation of the genius: whoever can attain to excellence, will be certain to engage a set of readers, whom no other method would have equally allured; and he that communicates truth with success, must be numbered among the first benefactors to mankind.

The same observation may be extended likewise to the passions: their influence is uniform, and their effects nearly the same in every human breast: a man loves and hates, desires and avoids, exactly like his neighbour; resentment and ambition, avarice and indolence, discover themselves by the same symptons in minds distant a thousand years from one another.

Nothing, therefore, can be more unjust, than to charge an author with plagiarism, merely because he assigns to every cause its natural effect; and makes his personages act, as others in like circumstances have always done. There are conceptions in which all men will agree, though each derives them from observation: whoever has been in love, will represent a lover impatient of every idea that interrupts h[illegible] ditations on his mistress, retiring to shades and so[illegible] that he may muse without disturbance on the appr[illegible] happiness, or associating himself with some friend th[illegible] ters his passion, and talking away the hours of absenc[illegible]

his darling subject. Whoever has been so unhappy as to have felt the miseries of long continued hatred, will, without any assistance from ancient volumes, be able to relate how the passions are kept in perpetual agitation, by the recollection of injury and meditations of revenge: how the blood boils at the name of the enemy, and life is worn away in contrivances of mischief.

Every other passion is alike simple and limited, if it be considered only with regard to the breast which it inhabits; the anatomy of the mind, as that of the body, must perpetually exhibit the same appearances; and though by the continued industry of successive inquirers, new movements will be from time to time discovered, they can effect only the minuter parts, and are commonly of more curiosity than importance.

It will now be natural to inquire, by what arts are the writers of the present and future ages to attract the notice and favour of mankind. They are to observe the alterations which time is always making in the modes of life, that they may gratify every generation with a picture of themselves. Thus love is uniform, but courtship is perpetually varying: the different arts of gallantry, which beauty has inspired, would of themselves be sufficient to fill a volume: sometimes balls and serenades, sometimes tournaments and adventures, have been employed to melt the hearts of ladies, who in another century have been sensible of scarce any other merit than that of riches, and listened only to jointures and pin-money. Thus the ambitious man has at all times been eager of wealth and power; but these hopes have been gratified in some countries by supplicating the people, and in others by flattering the prince: honour in some states has been only the reward of military achievements, in others it has been gained by noisy turbulence and popular clamours. Avarice has worn a different form, as she actuated the usurer of Rome, and the stock-jobber of England; and idleness itself, how little soever inclined to the trouble of invention, has been forced from time to time to change its amusements, and contrive different methods of wearing out the day.

Here then is the fund, from which those who study mankind may fill their compositions with an inexhaustible variety of images and allusions; and he must be confessed to look with little attention upon scenes thus perpetually changing, who cannot catch some of the figures before they are made vulgar by reiterated descriptions.

It has been discovered by Sir Isaac Newton, that the distinct and primogenial colours are only seven; but every eye

can wit that from various mixtures, in various proportions, in e diversifications of tints may be produced. In like manner, the passions of the mind, which put the world in motion, and produce all the bustle and eagerness of the busy crowds that swarm upon the earth: the passions, from whence arise all the pleasures and pains that we see and hear of, if we analyse the mind of man, are very few; but those few, agitated ternal causes shall happen to operate, an ing opinions, and accidental caprices, m alterations on the surface of life, that th e busied in delineating it, vanishes from w set of objects succeed, doomed to the luration with the former: thus curiosity mployment, and the busy part of manki ontemplative with the materials of spe time.

The complai ll topics are pre-occupied, is nothing more than the murmur of ignorance or idleness, by which some discourage others and some themselves; the mutability of mankind will always furnish writers with new images, and the luxuriance of fancy may always embellish them with new decorations.

Numb. 99. Tuesday, October 16, 1753.

——— *Magnis tamen excidit ausis.* Ovid.

But in the glorious enterprise he died. Addison.

It has always been the practice of mankind, to judge of actions by the event. The same attempts, conducted in the same manner, but terminated by different success, produce different judgments: they who attain their wishes, never want celebrators of their wisdom and their virtue; and they that miscarry, are quickly discovered to have been defective not only in mental but in moral qualities. The world will never be long without some good reason to hate the unhappy: their real faults are immediately detected; and if those are sufficient to sink them into infamy, an additional we calumny will be superadded: he that fails in his end after wealth or power, will not long retain either hones courage.

This species of injustice has so long prevailed in universal practice, that it seems likewise to have infected speculation: so few minds are able to separate the ideas of greatness and prosperity, that even Sir William Temple has determined, "that he who can deserve the name of a hero, must not only be virtuous but fortunate."

But this unreasonable distribution of praise and blame, none have suffered oftener than projectors, whose rapidity of imagination and vastness of design raise such envy in their fellow mortals, that every eye watches for their fall, and every heart exults at their distresses: yet even a projector may gain favour by success; and the tongue that was prepared to hiss, then endeavours to excel others in loudness of applause.

When Coriolanus, in Shakspeare, deserted to Ausidius, the Volscian servants at first insulted him, even while he stood under the protection of the household gods; but when they saw that the project took effect, and the stranger was seated at the head of the table, one of them very judiciously observes, "that he always thought there was more in him than he could think."

Machiavel has justly animadverted on the different notice taken by all succeeding times, of the two great projectors Catiline and Cæsar. Both formed the same project, and intended to raise themselves to power, by subverting the commonwealth: they pursued their design, perhaps, with equal abilities, and with equal virtue; but Catiline perished in the field, and Cæsar returned from Pharsalia with unlimited authority: and, from that time, every monarch of the earth has thought himself honoured by a comparison with Cæsar; and Catiline has never been mentioned, but that his name might be applied to traitors and incendiaries.

In an age more remote, Xerxes projected the conquest of Greece, and brought down the power of Asia against it: but after the world had been filled with expectation and terror, his army was beaten, his fleet was destroyed, and Xerxes has never been mentioned without contempt.

A few years afterwards, Greece likewise had her turn of giving birth to a projector: who, invading Asia with a small army, went forward in search of adventures, and by his escape from one danger, gained only more rashness to rush into another: he stormed city after city, over-ran kingdom after kingdom, fought battles only for barren victory, and invaded nations only that he might make his way through them to new invasions: but having been fortunate in the ex-

ecution of his projects, he died with the name of Alexander the Great.

These are, indeed, events of ancient times: but human nature is always the same, and every age will afford us instances of public censures influenced by events. The great business of the middle centuries, was the holy war; which undoubtedly was a noble project, and was for a long time prosecuted with a spirit equal [illegible] it had been contrived: but the ardour of [illegible] s only hurried them to destruction; for [illegible] uld not gain the territories for which they [illegible] at last gained, they could not keep them [illegible] s, therefore, have been the scoff of idleness [illegible] eir understanding and their virtue have bee [illegible] their conduct has been ridiculed, and thei [illegible] famed.

When Colun [illegible] king Ferdinand in the discovery of the [illegible] the sailors, with whom he embarked in the expedition, had so little confidence in their commander, that after having been long at sea looking for coasts which they expected never to find, they raised a general mutiny, and demanded to return. He found means to sooth them into a permission to continue the same course three days longer, and on the evening of the third day descried land. Had the impatience of the crew denied him a few hours of the time requested, what had been his fate but to have come back with the infamy of a vain projector, who had betrayed the king's credulity to useless expenses, and risked his life in seeking countries that had no existence? how would those that rejected his proposals have triumphed in their acuteness? and when would his name have been mentioned, but with the makers of potable gold and malleable glass?

The last royal projectors with whom the world has been troubled, were Charles of Sweden and the Czar of Muscovy. Charles, if any judgment may be formed of his designs by his measures and his inquiries, had purposed first to dethrone the Czar, then to lead his army through pathless deserts into China, thence to make his way by the sword through the whole circuit of Asia, and by the conquest of Turkey to unite Sweden with his new dominions; but this mighty project was crushed at Pultowa; and Charles has since been considered as a madman by those powers, who sent their embassadors to solicit his friendship, and their generals "to learn under him the art of war."

The Czar found employment sufficient in his own dominions, and amused himself in digging canals, and building

cities; murdering his subjects with insufferable fatigues, and transplanting nations from one corner of his dominions to another, without regretting the thousands that perished on the way: but he attained his end, he made his people formidable, and is numbered by fame among the demi-gods.

I am far from intending to vindicate the sanguinary projects of heros and conquerors, and would wish rather to diminish the reputation of their success, than the infamy of their miscarriages: for I cannot conceive, why he that has burned cities, wasted nations, and filled the world with horror and desolation, should be more kindly regarded by mankind, than he that died in the rudiments of wickedness; why he that accomplished mischief should be glorious, and he that only endeavoured it should be criminal. I would wish Cæsar and Cataline, Xexes and Alexander, Charles and Peter, huddled together in obscurity or detestation.

But there is another species of projectors, to whom I would willingly conciliate mankind; whose ends are generally laudable, and whose labours are innocent: who are searching out new powers of nature, or contriving new works of art; but who are yet persecuted with incessant obloquy, and whom the universal contempt with which they are treated, often debars from that success which their industry would obtain, if it were permitted to act without opposition.

They who find themselves inclined to censure new undertakings, only because they are new, should consider, that the folly of projection is very seldom the folly of a fool; it is commonly the ebullition of a capacious mind, crowded with variety of knowledge, and heated with intenseness of thought; it proceeds often from the consciousness of uncommon powers, from the confidence of those, who having already done much, are easily persuaded that they can do more. When Rowley had completed the orrery, he attempted the perpetual motion; when Boyle had exhausted the secrets of vulgar chemistry, he turned his thoughts to the work of transmutation.

A projector generally unites those qualities which have the fairest claim to veneration, extent of knowledge, and greatness of design: it was said of Cataline, "immoderata, incredibilia, nimis alta semper cupiebat." Projectors of all kinds agree in their intellects, though they differ in their morals; they all fail by attempting things beyond their power, by despising vulgar attainments, and aspiring to performances to which perhaps nature has not proportioned the force of man: when they fail, therefore, they fail not by idleness or timidity, but by rash adventure and fruitless diligence.

That the attempts of such men will often miscarry, we may reasonably expect; yet from such men, and such only, are we to hope for the cultivation of those parts of nature which lie yet waste, and the invention of those arts which are yet wanting to the felicity of life. If they are, therefore universally discouraged, art and discovery can make no advances. Whatever is attempted without previous certainty of success, may be consider[illegible]d amongst narrow minds may, therefore, [illegible] to censure and contempt; and if the libert[illegible] once indulged, every man will laugh at w[illegible] understand, every project will be consider[illegible]d every great or new design will be cen[illegible]. Men, unaccustomed to reason and rese[illegible] enterprise impracticable, which is extend[illegible] effects, or comprises many intermediate op[illegible] that presume to laugh at projectors, would [illegible] through the air in a winged chariot, and the movement of a mighty engine by the steam of water, as equally the dreams of mechanic lunacy; and would hear, with equal negligence, of the union of the Thames and Severn by a canal, and the scheme of Albuquerque, the viceroy of the Indies, who in the rage of hostility had contrived to make Egypt a barren desert, by turning the Nile into the Red Sea.

Those who have attempted much, have seldom failed to perform more than those who never deviate from the common roads of action: many valuable preparations of chemistry are supposed to have risen from unsuccessful inquiries after the grand elixir: it is, therefore, just to encourage those who endeavour to enlarge the power of art, since they often succeed beyond expectation; and when they fail, may sometimes benefit the world even by their miscarriages.

Numb. 102. Saturday, October 27, 1758.

.....Quid tam dextro pede concipis ut te
Conatus non pœniteat votique peracti? Juv.

What in the conduct of our life appears
So well design'd, so luckily begun,
But, when we have our wish, we wish undone. Dryden.

TO THE ADVENTURER.

Sir—I have been for many years a trader in London. My beginning was narrow, and my stock small; I was, there-

fore, a long time brow-beaten and despised by those, who, having more money, thought they had more merit than myself. I did not, however, suffer my resentment to instigate me to any mean arts of supplantation, nor my eagerness of riches to betray me to any indirect methods of gain; I pursued my business with incessant assiduity, supported by the hope of being one day richer than those who contemned me; and had, upon every annual review of my books, the satisfaction of finding my fortune increased beyond my expectation.

In a few years my industry and probity were fully recompensed, my wealth was really great, and my reputation for wealth still greater. I had large warehouses crowded with goods, and considerable sums in the public funds; I was caressed upon the Exchange by the most eminent merchants; became the oracle of the common council; was solicited to engage in all commercial undertakings; was flattered with the hopes of becoming in a short time one of the directors of a wealthy company, and to complete my mercantile honours, enjoyed the expensive happiness of fining for sheriff.

Riches you know, easily produce riches: when I had arrived to this degree of wealth, I had no longer any obstruction or opposition to fear; new acquisitions were hourly brought within my reach, and I continued for some years longer to heap thousands upon thousands.

At last I resolved to complete the circle of a citizen's prosperity by the purchase of an estate in the country, and to close my life in retirement. From the hour that this design entered my imagination, I found the fatigues of my employment every day more oppressive, and persuaded myself that I was no longer equal to perpetual attention, and that my health would soon be destroyed by the torment and distraction of extensive business. I could image to myself no happiness, but in vacant jollity, and uninterrupted leisure: nor entertain my friends with any other topic, than the vexation and uncertainty of trade, and the happiness of rural privacy.

But notwithstanding these declarations, I could not at once reconcile myself to the thoughts of ceasing to get money; and though I was every day inquiring for a purchase, I found some reason for rejecting all that were offered me; and, indeed, had accumulated so many beauties and conveniences in my idea of the spot where I was finally to be happy, that, perhaps, the world might have been travelled over, without discovery of a place which would not have been defective in some particular.

Thus I went on still talking of retirement, and still refusing to retire; my friends began to laugh at my delays, and I grew ashamed to trifle longer with my own inclinations; an estate was at length purchased, I transferred my stock to a prudent young man who had married my daughter, went down into the country and commenced lord of a spacious manor.

Here for some time I found happiness equal to my expectation. I reformed the old house according to the advice of the best architects, I threw down the walls of the garden, and enclosed it with palisades, planted long avenues of trees, filled a green house with exotic plants, dug a new canal, and threw the earth into the old moat.

The fame of these expensive improvements brought in all the country to see the show. I entertained my visiters with great liberality, led them round my garden, showed them my apartments, laid before them plans for new decorations, and was gratified by the wonder of some and the envy of others.

I was envied; but how little can one man judge of the condition of another! The time was now coming in which affluence and splendour could no longer make me pleased with myself. I had built till the imagination of the architect was exhausted; I had added one convenience to another, till I

second. I protract the breakfast as long as I can, because when it is ended I have no call for my attention, till I can with some degree of decency grow impatient for my dinner. If I could dine all my life, I should be happy; I eat not because I am hungry, but because I am idle: but, alas! the time quickly comes when I can eat no longer; and so ill does my constitution second my inclination, that I cannot bear strong liquors: seven hours must then be endured before I shall sup; but supper comes at last, the more welcome as it is in a short time succeeded by sleep.

Such, Mr. Adventurer, is the happiness, the hope of which seduced me from the duties and pleasures of a mercantile life. I shall be told by those who read my narrative, that there are many means of innocent amusement, and many schemes of useful employment, which I do not appear ever to have known; and that nature and art have provided pleasures, by which, without the drudgery of settled business, the active may be engaged, the solitary soothed, and the social entertained.

These arts, Sir, I have tried. When first I took possession of my estate, in conformity to the taste of my neighbours, I bought guns and nets, filled my kennel with dogs and my stable with horses: but a little experience showed me, that these instruments of rural felicity would afford me few gratifications. I never shot but to miss the mark, and to confess the truth, was afraid of the fire of my own gun. I could discover no music in the cry of the dogs, nor could divest myself with pity for the animal whose peaceful and inoffensive life was sacrificed to our sport. I was not, indeed, always at leisure to reflect upon her danger; for my horse, who had been bred to the chase, did not always regard my choice either of speed or way, but leaped hedges and ditches at his own discretion, and hurried me along with the dogs, to the great diversion of my brother sportsmen. His eagerness of pursuit once incited him to swim a river; and I had leisure to resolve in the water, that I would never hazard my life again for the destruction of a hare.

I then ordered books to be procured, and by the direction of the vicar had in a few weeks a closet elegantly furnished. You will perhaps, be surprised when I shall tell you, that when once I had ranged them according to their sizes, and piled them up in regular gradations, I had received all the pleasures which they could give me. I am not able to excite in myself any curiosity after events which have been long passed, and in which I can therefore have no interest; I am utterly unconcerned to know whether Tully or Demosthenes excelled in oratory, whether Hannibal lost Italy by his own

negligence or the corruption of his countrymen. I have no skill in controversial learning, nor can conceive why so many volumes should have been written upon questions, which I have lived so long and so happily without understanding. I once resolved to go through the volumes relating to the office of the justices of the peace, but found them so crabbed and intricate, that in less than a month I desisted in despair, and resolved to supply my deficiencies by paying a competent salary to a skilful clerk.

I am naturally inclined to hospitality, and for some time kept up a constant intercourse of visits with the neighbouring gentlemen: but though they are easily brought about me by better wine than they can find at any other house, I am not much relieved by their conversation; they have no skill in commerce or the stocks, and I have no knowledge of the history of families or the factions of the country; so that when the first civilities are over, they usually talk to one another, and I am left alone in the midst of the company. Though I cannot drink myself, I am obliged to encourage the circulation of the glass; their mirth grows more turbulent and obstreperous; and before their merriment is at an end, I am sick with disgust and perhaps reproached with my

and equally lovers of truth, do not always think in the same manner?

With regard to simple propositions, where the terms are understood, and the whole subject is comprehended at once, there is such a uniformity of sentiment among all human beings, that, for many ages, a very numerous set of notions were supposed to be innate, or necessarily coexistent with the faculty of reason; it being imagined, that universal agreement could proceed only from the invariable dictates of the universal parent.

In questions diffuse and compounded, this similarity of determination is no longer to be expected. At our first sally into the intellectual world, we all march together along one stright and open road; but as we proceed further, and wider prospects open to our view, every eye fixes upon a different scene; we divide into various paths, and, as we move forward, are still at a greater distance from each other. As a question becomes more complicated and involved, and extends to a greater number of relations, disagreement of opinion will always be multiplied; not because we are irrational, but because we are finite beings, furnished with different kinds of knowledge, exerting different degrees of attention, one discovering consequences which escape another, none taking in the whole concatenation of causes and effects, and most comprehending but a very small part, each comparing what he observes with a different criterion, and each referring it to a different purpose.

Where, then, is the wonder, that they who see only a small part, should judge erroneously of the whole? or that they, who see different and dissimilar parts, should judge differently from each other?

Whatever has various respects, must have various appearances of good and evil, beauty or deformity; thus, the gardener tears up as a weed, the plant which the physician gathers as a medicine; and "a general," says Sir Kenelm Digby, "will look with pleasure over a plain, as a fit place on which the fate of empires might be decided in battle, which the farmer will despise as bleak and barren, neither fruitful of pasturage, nor fit for tillage.

Two men examining the same question, proceed commonly like the physician and gardener in selecting herbs, or the farmer and hero looking on the plain: they bring minds impressed with different notions, and direct their inquiries to different ends; they form, therefore, contrary conclusions, and each wonders at the other's absurdity.

We have less reason to be surprised or offended when we find others differ from us in opinion, because we very often differ from ourselves. How often we alter our minds, we do not always remark; because the change is sometimes made imperceptibly and gradually, and the last conviction effaces all memory of the former: yet every man, accustomed from time to take a survey of his own notions, will, by a slight retrospection, be able t[illegible] is mind has suffered many revolutions; that [illegible] have in the several parts of his life been c[illegible] proved, pursued and shunned: and that, on [illegible] even when his practice has been steady, his n[illegible] avering, and he has persisted in a schem[illegible] er because he feared the censure of incons[illegible] use he was always pleased with his own choi[illegible]

Of the different ac[illegible] wn by the same objects as they are viewed on opposite sides, and of the different inclinations which they must constantly raise in him that contemplates them, a more striking example cannot easily be found than two Greek epigrammatists will afford us in their accounts of human life, which I shall lay before the reader in English prose.

Posidippus, a comic poet, utters this complaint; "Through which of the paths of life is it eligible to pass? In public assemblies are debates and troublesome affairs: domestic privacies are haunted with anxieties; in the country is labour; on the sea is terror: in a foreign land, he that has money must live in fear, he that wants it must pine in distress: are you married? you are troubled with suspicions: are you single? you languish in solitude; children occasion toil, and a childless life is a state of destitution; the time of youth is a time of folly, and gray hairs are loaded with infirmity. This choice only, therefore, can be made, either never to receive being, or immediately to lose it."

Such and so gloomy is the prospect, which Posidippus has laid before us. But we are not to acquiesce too hastily in his determination against the value of existence: for Metrodorus, a philosopher of Athens, has shown, that life has pleasures as well as pains; and having exhibited the present state of man in brighter colours, draws with equal appearance of reason a contrary conclusion.

"You may pass well through any of the paths of life.—In public assemblies are honours and transactions of wisdom; in domestic privacy is stillness and quiet; in the country are the beauties of nature; on the sea is the hope of gain; in a foreign land, he that is rich is honoured, he that is poor

may keep his poverty secret: are you married? you have a cheerful house; are you single? you are unincumbered; children are objects of affection; to be without children is to be without care: the time of youth is the time of vigour, and gray hairs are made venerable by piety. It will, therefore, never be a wise man's choice, either not to obtain existence, or to lose it; for every state of life has its felicity."

In these epigrams are included most of the questions which have engaged the speculations of the inquirers after happiness: and though they will not much assist our determinations, they may, perhaps, equally promote our quiet, by showing that no absolute determination ever can be formed.

Whether a public station, or private life, be desirable, has always been debated. We see here both the allurements and discouragements of civil employments: on one side there is trouble, on the other honour; the management of affairs is vexatious and difficult, but it is the only duty in which wisdom can be conspicuously displayed: it must then still be left to every man to choose either ease or glory; nor can any general precept be given, since no man can be happy by the prescription of another.

Thus what is said of children by Posidippus, "that they are occasions of fatigues," and by Metrodorus, "that they are objects of affection," is equally certain; but whether they will give most pain or pleasure, must depend on their future conduct and dispositions, on many causes over which the parent can have little influence: there is, therefore, room for all the caprices of imagination, and desire must be proportioned to the hope or fear that shall happen to predominate.

Such is the uncertainty in which we are always likely to remain with regard to questions wherein we have most interest, and which every day affords us fresh opportunity to examine: we may examine, indeed, but we never can decide, because our faculties are unequal to the subject: we see a little, and form an opinion; we see more and change it.

This inconstancy and unsteadines, to which we must so often find ourselves liable, ought certainly to teach us moderation and forbearance towards those who cannot accommodate themselves to our sentiments: if they are deceived, we have no right to attribute their mistake to obstinacy or negligence, because we likewise have been mistaken; we may, perhaps, again change our own opinion; and what excuse shall we able to find for aversion and malignity conceived against him, whom we shall then find to have committed no fault, and who offended us only by refusing to follow us into error.

It may likewise contribute to soften that resentment which pride naturally raises against opposition, if we consider, that he who differs from us, does not always contradict us; he has one view of an object, and we have another; each describes what he sees with equal fidelity, and each regulates his steps by his own eyes: one man with Posidippus, looks on celibacy as a state of gloomy solitude, without a partner in joy, or a comfo[illegible] the other considers it with Metrodurus, as [illegible] incumbrances, in which a man is at liberty [illegible] n gratifications, to remove from place to pla[illegible] asure, and to think of nothing but merri[illegible]: full of these notions one hastens to choos[illegible] ther laughs at his rashness, or pities his igno[illegible] it is possible that each is right, but that each is [illegible] himself.

Life is not the [illegible] we see a little, very little; and what is beyo[illegible] njecture. If we inquire of those who have gone before us, we receive small satisfaction: some have travelled life without observation, and some willingly mislead us. The only thought, therefore, on which we can repose with comfort, is that which presents to us the care of Providence, whose eye takes in the whole of things, and under whose direction all involuntary errors will terminate in happiness.

Numb. 108. Saturday, November 17, 1753.

Nobis, cum simul occidit brevis lux,
Nox est perpetuo una dormienda. — Catullus.

When once the short-lived mortal dies,
A night eternal seals his eyes. — Addison.

It may have been observed by every reader, that there are certain topics which never are exhausted. Of some images and sentiments the mind of man may be said to be enamoured: it meets them, however often they occur, with the same ardour which a lover feels at the sight of his mistress, and parts from them with the same regret when they can no longer be enjoyed.

Of this kind are many descriptions which the poets have transcribed from each other, and their successors will probably copy to the end of time; which will continue to engage, or as the French term it, to flatter the imagination, as long as human nature shall remain the same.

When a poet mentions the spring, we know that the zephyrs are about to whisper, that the groves are to recover their verdure, the linnets to warble forth their notes of love, and the flocks and herds to frisk over vales painted with flowers; who is there so insensible of the beauties of nature, so little delighted with the renovation of the world, as not to feel his heart bound at the mention of the spring?

When night overshadows a romantic scene, all is stillness, silence, and quiet; the poets of the grove cease their melody, the moon towers over the world in gentle majesty, men forget their labours and their cares, and every passion and pursuit is for awhile suspended. All this we know already, yet we hear it repeated without weariness; because such is generally the life of man, that he is pleased to think on the time when he shall pause from a sense of his condition.

When a poetical grove invites us to its covert, we know that we shall find what we have already seen, a limpid brook murmuring over pebbles, a bank diversified with flowers, a green arch that excludes the sun, and a natural grot shaded with myrtles; yet who can forbear to enter the pleasing gloom, to enjoy coolness and privacy, and gratify himself once more by scenes with which nature has formed him to be delighted?

Many moral sentiments likewise are so adapted to our state, that we find approbation whenever they solicit it, and are seldom read without exciting a gentle emotion in the mind; such is the comparison of the life of man with the duration of a flower, a thought which perhaps every nation has heard warbled in its own language, from the inspired poets of the Hebrews to our own times: yet this comparison must always please, because every heart feels its justness, and every hour confirms it by example.

Such likewise, is the precept that directs us to use the present hour, and refer nothing to a distant time, which we are uncertain whether we shall reach; this every moralist may venture to inculcate, because it will always be approved, and because it is always forgotten.

This rule is, indeed, every day enforced, by arguments more powerful than the dissertations of moralists: we see men pleasing themselves with future happiness, fixing a certain hour for the completion of their wishes, and perishing some at a greater and some at a less distance from the happy time; all complaining of their disappointments, and lamenting that they had suffered the years which heaven allowed them, to pass without improvement, and deferred the principal

purpose of their lives to the time when life itself was to forsake them.

It is not only uncertain, whether, through all the casualties and dangers which beset the life of man, we shall be able to reach the time appointed for happiness or wisdom; but it is likely that whatever now hinders us from doing that which our reason and conscience declare necessary to be done, will equally obstruct [illegible] e. It is easy for the imagination, opera[illegible] yet existing, to please itself with scenes of [illegible] or plan out courses of uniform virtue; bu[illegible] re in real life inseparably united; habits [illegible] y indulgence; and reason loses her dignity [illegible] she has oftener yielded to temptation: "[illegible] e well to-day," says Martial, "will be [illegible] e well to-morrow."

Of the unce[illegible] human good, every human being seems to be [illegible] yet this uncertainty is voluntarily increased by unnecessary delay, whether we respect external causes, or consider the nature of our own minds. He that now feels a desire do right, and wishes to regulate his life according to his reason, is not sure that, at any future time assignable, he shall be able to rekindle the same ardour; he that has an opportunity offered him of breaking loose from vice and folly, cannot know, but that he shall hereafter be more entangled, and struggle for freedom without obtaining it.

We are so unwilling to believe any thing to our own disadvantage, that we will always imagine the perspicacity of our judgment and the strength of our resolution more likely to increase than to grow less by time; and, therefore, conclude, that the will to pursue laudable purposes, will be always seconded by the power.

But however we may be deceived in calculating the strength of our faculties, we cannot doubt the uncertainty of that life in which they must be employed: we see every day the unexpected death of our friends and our enemies, we see new graves hourly opened for men older and younger than ourselves, for the cautious and the careless, the dissolute and the temperate, for men who like us were providing to enjoy or improve hours now irreversibly cut off; we see all this, and yet, instead of living, let year glide after year in preparations to live.

Men are so frequently cut off in the midst of their projections, that sudden death causes little emotion in them that behold it, unless it be impressed upon the attention by uncommon circumstances. I, like every other man, have outlived

multitudes, have seen ambition sink in its triumphs, and beauty perish in its bloom; but have been seldom so much affected as by the fate of Euryalus, whom I lately lost as I began to love him.

Euryalus had for some time flourished in a lucrative profession; but having suffered his imagination to be fired by an unextinguishable curiosity, he grew weary of the same dull round of life, resolved to harass himself no longer with the drudgery of getting money, but to quit his business and his profit, and enjoy for a few years the pleasures of travel. His friends heard him proclaim his resolution without suspecting that he intended to pursue it: but he was constant to his purpose, and with great expedition closed his accounts and sold his moveables, passed a few days in bidding farewell to his companions, and with all the eagerness of romantic chivalry, crossed the sea in search of happiness. Whatever place was renowned in ancient or modern history, whatever region art or nature had distinguished, he determined to visit: full of design and hope he landed on the continent; his friends expected accounts from him of the new scenes that opened in his progress, but were informed in a few days that Euryalus was dead.

Such was the end of Euryalus. He is entered that state, whence none ever shall return; and can now only benefit his friends, by remaining in their memories a permanent and efficacious instance of the blindness of desire, and the uncertainty of all terrestrial good. But, perhaps, every man has, like me, lost an Euryalus, has known a friend die with happiness in his grasp; and yet every man continues to think himself secure of life, and defers to some future time of leisure what he knows it will be fatal to have finally omitted.

It is, indeed, with this as with other frailties inherent in our nature; the desire of deferring in another time what cannot be done without endurance of some pain, or forbearance of some pleasure, will, perhaps, never be totally overcome or suppressed; there will always be something that we shall wish to have finished, and be nevertheless unwilling to begin: but against this unwillingness it is our duty to struggle, and every conquest over our passions will make way for an easier conquest: custom is equally forcible to bad and good, nature will always be at variance with reason, but will rebel more feebly as she is oftener subdued.

The common neglect of the present hour is more shameful and criminal, as no man is betrayed to it by error, but admits it by negligence. Of the instability of life, the weakest understanding never thinks wrong, though the strongest of-

ten omits to think justly; reason and experience are always ready to inform us of our real state; but we refuse to listen to their suggestions, because we feel our hearts unwilling to obey them: but surely, nothing is more unworthy of a reasonable being, than to shut his eyes, when he sees the road which he is commanded to travel, that he may deviate with fewer reproaches from himself; nor could any motive to tenderness, except the consciousness that we have all been guilty of the same fa ity those who thus consign themselves to v

NUMB. November 27, 1753.

Vix e OVID.

The deeds of long descended ancestors
Are but by grace of imputation ours. DRYDEN.

THE evils inseparably annexed to the present condition of man, are so numerous and afflictive, that it has been from age to age, the task of some to bewail, and of others to solace them; and he, therefore, will be in danger of seeing a common enemy, who shall attempt to depreciate the few pleasures and felicities which nature has allowed us.

Yet I will confess, that I have sometimes employed my thoughts in examining the pretensions that are made to happiness, by the splendid and envied condition of life; and have not thought the hour unprofitably spent, when I have detected the imposture of counterfeit advantages, and found disquiet lurking under false appearances of gaiety and greatness.

It is asserted by a tragic poet, that "est miser nemo nisi comparatus," "no man is miserable, but as he is compared with others happier than himself:" this position is not strictly and philosophically true. He might have said, with rigorous propriety, that no man is happy but as he is compared with the miserable; for such is the state of this world, that we find it absolute misery, but happiness only comparative; we may incur as much pain as we can possibly endure, though we never can obtain as much happiness as we might p enjoy.

Yet it is certain likewise, that many of our miseri merely comparative; we are often made unhappy, not presence of any real evil, but by the absence of some fic

good; of something which is not required by any real want of nature, which has not in itself any power of gratification, and which neither reason nor fancy would have prompted us to wish, did we not see it in the possession of others.

For a mind diseased with vain longings after unattainable advantages, no medicine can be prescribed, but an impartial inquiry into the real worth of that which is so ardently desired. It is well known, how much the mind as well as the eye, is deceived by distance: and, perhaps, it will be found, that of many imagined blessings it may be doubted, whether he that wants or possesses them has more reason to be satisfied with his lot.

The dignity of high birth and long extraction, no man to whom nature has denied it, can confer upon himself; and, therefore, it deserves to be considered, whether the want of that which can never be gained, may not easily be endured. It is true, that if we consider the triumph and delight with which most of those recount their ancestors, who have ancestors to recount, and the artifices by which some who have risen to unexpected fortune endeavour to insert themselves into an honourable stem, we shall be inclined to fancy that wisdom or virtue may be had by inheritance, or that all the excellencies of a line of progenitors are accumulated on their descendants. Reason, indeed, will soon inform us, that our estimation of birth is arbitrary and capricious, and that dead ancestors can have no influence but upon imagination: let it then be examined, whether one dream may not operate in the place of another: whether he that owes nothing to forefathers, may not receive equal pleasure from the consciousness of owing all to himself; whether he may not, with a little meditation, find it more honourable to found than to continue a family, and to gain dignity than transmit it; whether, if he receives no dignity from the virtues of his family, he does not likewise escape the danger of being disgraced by their crimes; and whether he that brings a new name into the world, has not the convenience of playing the game of life without a stake, and opportunity of winning much though he has nothing to lose.

There is another opinion concerning happiness, which approaches much more nearly to universality, but which may, perhaps, with equal reason be disputed. The pretensions to ancestral honours many of the sons of earth easily see to be ill-grounded; but all agree to celebrate the advantage of hereditary riches, and to consider those as the minions of fortune, who are wealthy from their cradles, whose estate is "res non parta labore sed relicta:" "the acquisition of ano-

ther, not of themselves;" and whom a father's industry has dispensed from a laborious attention to arts or commerce, and left at liberty to dispose of life as fancy shall direct them.

If every man were wise and virtuous, capable to discern the best use of time, and resolute to practise it; it might be granted, I think, without hesitation, that total liberty would be a blessing; and that it would be desirable to be left at large to the exercise of religious and social duties, without the interruption of important avocations.

But since felicity is relative, and that which is the means of happiness to one man may be to another the cause of misery, we are to consider what state is best adapted to human nature in its present degeneracy and frailty. And, surely, to far the greater number it is highly expedient, that they should by some settled scheme of duties be rescued from the tyranny of caprice, that they should be driven on by necessity through the paths of life with their attention confined to a stated task, that they may be less at leisure to deviate into mischief at the call of folly.

When we observe the lives of those whom an ample inheritance has let loose to their own direction, what can we dis-

the gallies; and it is well, when nature or fortune find employment for those, who would not have known how to procure it for themselves.

He whose mind is engaged by the acquisition or improvement of a fortune, not only escapes the insipidity of indifference, and the tediousness of inactivity, but gains enjoyments wholly unknown to those who live lazily on the toil of others; for life affords no higher pleasure than that of surmounting difficulties, passing from one step of success to another, forming new wishes, and seeing them gratified. He that labours in any great or laudable undertaking, has his fatigues first supported by hope, and afterwards rewarded by joy; he is always moving to a certain end, and when he has attained it, an end more distant invites him to a new pursuit.

It does not, indeed, always happen, that diligence is fortunate; the wisest schemes are broken by unexpected accidents; the most constant perseverance sometimes toils through life without a recompense; but labour, though unsuccessful, is more eligible than idleness; he that prosecutes a lawful purpose by lawful means, acts always with the approbation of his own reason; he is animated through the course of his endeavours by an expectation which, though not certain, he knows to be just: and is at last comforted in his disappointment, by the consciousness that he has not failed by his own fault.

That kind of life is most happy which affords us most opportunites of gaining our own esteem: and what can any man infer in his own favour from a condition to which, however prosperous, he contributed nothing, and which the vilest and weakest of the species would have obtained by the same right, had he happened to be the son of the same father.

To strive with difficulties, and to conquer them, is the highest human felicity; the next is to strive, and deserve to conquer; but he whose life has passed without a contest, and who can boast neither success nor merit, can survey himself only as a useless filler of existence: and if he is content with his own character, must owe his satisfaction to insensibility.

Thus it appears that the satirist advised rightly when he directed us to resign ourselves to the hands of Heaven, and to leave to superior powers the determination of our lot:

Permittes ipsis expendere Numinibus, quid
Conveniat nobis, rebusque sit utile nostris
Carior est illis homo quam sibi.

Intrust thy fortune to the pow'rs above:
Leave them to manage for thee, and to grant
What their unerring wisdom sees thee want.
In goodness as in greatness they excel:
Ah! that we lov'd ourselves but half so well. DRYDEN.

What state of life admits most happiness, is uncertain; but that uncertainty ought to repress the petulance of comparison, and silence the murmurs of discontent.

NUMB. 115. TUESDAY, December 11, 1753.

Scribimus indocti doctique. HOR.

All dare to write, who can or cannot read.

THEY who have attentively considered the history of mankind, know that every age has its peculiar character. At one time, no desire is felt but for military honours; every summer affords battles and sieges, and the world is filled with

perhaps, be true, that at all times more have been willing than have been able to write, yet there is no reason for believing, that the dogmatical legions of the present race were ever equalled in number by any former period; for so widely is spread the itch of literary praise, that almost every man is an author, either in act or in purpose; has either bestowed his favours on the public, or withholds them, that they may be more seasonably offered, or made more worthy of acceptance.

In former times, the pen, like the sword, was considered as consigned by nature to the hands of men! the ladies contented themselves with private virtues and domestic excellence; and a female writer, like a female warrior, was considered as a kind of eccentric being, that deviated, however, illustriously, from her due sphere of motion, and was, therefore, rather to be gazed at with wonder, than countenanced by imitation. But as the times past are said to have seen a nation of Amazons, who drew the bow and wielded the battle-axe, formed encampments and wasted nations; the revolution of years has now produced a generation of Amazons of the pen, who with the spirit of their predecessors have set masculine tyranny at defiance, asserted their claim to the regions of science, and seemed resolved to contest the usurpations of virility.

Some, indeed, there are of both sexes, who are authors only in desire, but have not yet attained the power of executing their intentions: whose performances have not arrived at bulk sufficient to form a volume, or who have not the confidence, however impatient of nameless obscurity, to solicit openly the assistance of the printer. Among these are the innumerable correspondents of public papers, who are always offering assistance which no man will receive, and suggesting hints that are never taken, and who complain loudly of the perverseness and arrogance of authors, lament their insensibility of their own interest, and fill the coffee-houses with dark stories of performances by eminent hands, which have been offered and rejected.

To what cause this universal eagerness of writing can be properly ascribed, I have not yet been able to discover. It is said, that every art is propagated in proportion to the rewards conferred upon it; a position from which a stranger would naturally infer, that literature was now blessed with patronage far transcending the candour or munificence of the Augustine age, that the road to greatness was open to none but authors, and that by writing alone riches and honours were to be obtained.

But since it is true, that writers like other competitors are very little disposed to favour one another, it is not to be expected, that at a time when every man writes, any man will patronize; and accordingly, there is not one that I can recollect at present who professes the least regard for the votaries of science, invites the addresses of learned men, or seems to hope for reputation from any pen but his own.

The cause, the [illegible] demical conspiracy for the destruction of pa[illegible] a secret: nor can I discover, whether w[illegible] ences of the constellations, or the intemperature of sea[illegible] ether the long continuance of the wind at any sin[illegible] intoxicating vapours exhaled from the earth, h[illegible] r nobles and our peasants, our soldiers and tr[illegible] and women, all into wits, philosophers, and v[illegible]

It is, indeed, of [illegible] ce to search out the cure than the cause of thi[illegible] malady; and he would deserve well of his country, who, instead of amusing himself with conjectural speculations, should find means of persuading the peer to inspect his steward's accounts, or repair the rural mansion of his ancestors, who could replace the tradesman behind his counter, and send back the farmer to the mattock and the flail.

General irregularities are known in time to remedy themselves. By the constitution of ancient Egypt, the priesthood was continually increasing, till at length there was no people beside themselves: the establishment was then dissolved, and the number of priests was reduced and limited. Thus amongst us, writers will, perhaps, be multiplied, till no readers will be found, and then the ambition of writing must necessarily cease.

But as it will be long before the cure is thus gradually effected, and the evil should be stopped, if it be possible, before it rises to so great a height, I could wish that both sexes would fix their thoughts upon some salutary considerations, which might repress their ardour for that reputation which not one of many thousands is fated to obtain.

Let it be deeply impressed, and frequently recollected, that he who has not obtained the proper qualifications of an author, can have no excuse for the arrogance of writing, but the power of imparting to mankind something necessary to be known. A man uneducated or unlettered may sometimes start a useful thought, or make a lucky discovery, or obtain by chance some secret of nature, or some intelligence of facts, of which the most enlightened mind may be ignorant, and

which it is better to reveal, though by a rude and unskilful communication, than to lose for ever by suppressing it.

But few will be justified by this plea; for of the innumerable books and pamphlets that have overflowed the nation, scarce one has made any addition to real knowledge, or contained more than a transposition of common sentiments and a repetition of common phrases.

It will be naturally inquired, when the man who feels an inclination to write, may venture to suppose himself properly qualified; and, since every man who is inclined to think well of his own intellect, by what test he may try his abilities, without hazarding the contempt or resentment of the public.

The first qualification of a writer, is a perfect knowledge of the subject which he undertakes to treat; since we cannot teach what we do not know, nor can properly undertake to instruct others while we are ourselves in want of instruction. The next requisite is, that he be master of the language in which he delivers his sentiments; if he treats of science and demonstration, that he has attained a style clear, pure, nervous, and expressive; if his topics be probable and persuasory, that he be able to recommend them by the superaddition of elegance and imagery, to display the colours of varied diction, and pour forth the music of modulated periods.

If it be again inquired, upon what principles any man shall conclude that he wants these powers, it may be readily answered, that no end is attained but by the proper means: he only can rationally presume that he understands a subject, who has read and compared the writers that have hitherto discussed it, familiarized their arguments to himself by long meditation, consulted the foundations of different systems, and separated truth from error by a rigorous examination.

In like manner, he only has a right to suppose that he can express his thoughts, whatever they are, with perspicuity or elegance, who has carefully perused the best authors, accurately noted their diversities of style, diligently selected the best modes of diction, and familiarized them by long habits of attentive practice.

No man is a rhetorician or philosopher by chance. He who knows that he undertakes to write on questions which he has never studied, may without hesitation determine, that he is about to waste his own time and that of his reader, and expose himself to the derision of those whom he aspires to instruct: he that without forming his style by the study of the best models, hastens to obtrude his compositions on the public, may be certain, that whatever hope or flattery may suggest, he shall shock the learned ear with barbarisms, and

contribute, wherever his works shall be received, to the depravation of taste and the corruption of language.

Numb. 119. Tuesday, December 25, 1753.

Latius regnes avidum domando
Spiritum, quàm si Lybium remotis
Gadibus jungas et uterque Pœnus
Serviat uni. Hor.

By virtue's precepts to control
The thirsty cravings of the soul,
Is over wider realms to reign
Unenvied monarch, than if Spain
You could to distant Lybia join,
And both the Carthages were thine. Francis.

When Socrates was asked, "which of mortal men was to be accounted nearest to the *gods* in happiness?" he answered, "that man who is in want of the fewest things."

In this answer, Socrates left it to be guessed by his auditors, whether by the exemption from want which was to constitute happiness, he meant amplitude of possessions or contraction of desire. And, indeed, there is so little difference between them, that Alexander the Great confessed the inhabitant of a tub the next man to the master of the world; and left a declaration to future ages, that if he was not Alexander he should wish to be Diogenes.

These two states, however, though they resemble each other in their consequence, differ widely with respect to the facility with which they may be attained. To make great acquisitions can happen to very few; and in the uncertainty of human affairs, to many it will be incident to labour without reward, and to lose what they already possess by endeavours to make it more: some will always want abilities, and others opportunities to accumulate wealth. It is therefore happy, that nature has allowed us a more certain and easy road to plenty; every man may grow rich by contracting his wishes, and by quiet acquiescence in what has been given him supply the absence of more.

Yet so far is almost every man from emulating the happiness of the gods, by any other means than grasping at their power, that it seems to be the great business of life to create wants as fast as they are satisfied. It has been long observed by moralists, that every man squanders or loses a great part

of that life, of which every man knows and deplores the shortness; and it may be remarked with equal justness, that though every man laments his own insufficiency to his happiness, and knows himself a necessitous and precarious being, incessantly soliciting the assistance of others, and feeling wants which his own art or strength cannot supply; yet there is no man, who does not by the superaddition of unnatural cares, render himself still more dependent; who does not create an artificial poverty, and suffer himself to feel pain for the want of that, of which, when it is gained, he can have no enjoyment.

It must, indeed, be allowed, that as we lose part of our time because it steals away silent and invisible, and many an hour is passed before we recollect that it is passing; so unnatural desires insinuate themselves unobserved into the mind, and we do not perceive that they are gaining upon us, till the pain which they give us awakens us to notice. No man is sufficiently vigilant to take account of every minute of his life, or to watch every motion of his heart. Much of our time likewise is sacrificed to custom; we trifle, because we see others trifle: in the same manner we catch from example the contagion of desire; we see all about us busied in pursuit of imaginary good, and begin to bustle in the same chase, lest greater activity should triumph over us.

It is true, that to man as a member of society, many things become necessary, which, perhaps, in a state of nature are superfluous; and that many things, not absolutely necessary, are yet so useful and convenient, that they cannot easily be spared. I will make yet a more ample and liberal concession, In opulent states and regular governments, the temptations to wealth and rank, and to the distinctions that follow them, are such as no force of understanding finds it easy to resist.

If, therefore, I saw the quiet of life disturbed only by endeavours after wealth and honour; by solicitude, which the world, whether justly or not, considered as important; I should scarcely have had courage to inculcate any precepts of moderation and forbearance. He that is engaged in a pursuit, in which all mankind profess to be his rivals, is supported by the authority of all mankind in the prosecution of his design, and will therefore, scarcely stop to hear the lectures of a solitary philosopher. Nor am I certain, that the accumulation of honest gain ought to be hindered, or the ambition of just honours always to be repressed. Whatever can enable the possessor to confer any benefit upon others, may be desired upon virtuous principles; and we ought not too rashly to ac-

cuse any man of intending to confine the influence of his acquisitions to himself.

But if we look round upon mankind, whom shall we find among those that fortune permits to form their own manners, that is not tormenting himself with a wish for something, of which all the pleasure and all the benefit will cease at the moment of attainment? one man is beggaring his posterity to build a house, [illegible] he never will inhabit; another is levelli[illegible]n a prospect, which when he has once en[illegible]joy no more; another is painting ceilin[illegible]ot, and filling his apartments with co[illegible] that some neighbouring house may not b[illegible]an his own.

That splendo[illegible]e not desirable, I am not so abstracted [illegible]ulcate; but if we inquire closely into the [illegible]hey are esteemed, we shall find them valued [illegible]lences of wealth. Nothing, therefore, can show greater depravity of understanding, than to delight in the show when the reality is wanting; or voluntarily to become poor, that strangers may for a time imagine us to be rich.

But there are yet minuter objects and more trifling anxieties. Men may be found who are kept from sleep by the want of a shell particularly variegated; who are wasting their lives, in stratagems to obtain a book in a language which they do not understand; who pine with envy at the flowers of another man's parterre; who hover like vultures round the owner of a fossil, in hopes to plunder his cabinet at his death: and who would not much regret to see a street in flames, if a box of medals might be scattered in the tumult.

He that imagines me to speak of these sages in terms exaggerated and hyperbolical, has conversed but little with the race of virtuosos. A slight acquaintance with their studies, and a few visits to their assemblies, would inform him, that nothing is so worthless, but that prejudice and caprice can give it value; nor any thing of so little use, but by indulging an idle competition or unreasonable pride, a man may make it to himself one of the necessaries of life.

Desires like these, I may surely, without incurring the censure of moroseness, advise every man to repel when they invade his mind; or if he admits them, never to allow them any greater influence, than is necessary to give petty employments the power of pleasing, and diversify the day with slight amusements.

An ardent wish, whatever be its object, will alw[illegible] able to interrupt tranquillity. What we believe ourse[illegible]

want, torments us not in proportion to its real value, but according to the estimation by which we have rated it in our own minds; in some diseases, the patient has been observed to long for food, which scarce any extremity of hunger would in health have compelled him to swallow; but while his organs were thus depraved, the craving was irresistible, nor could any rest be obtained till it was appeased by compliance. Of the same nature are the irregular appetites of the mind; though they are often excited by trifles, they are equally disquieting with real wants: the Roman, who wept at the death of his lamprey, felt the same degree of sorrow that extorts tears on other occasions.

Inordinate desires, of whatever kind, ought to be repressed upon yet a higher consideration; they must be considered as enemies not only to happiness but to virtue. There are men, among those commonly reckoned the learned and the wise, who spare no stratagem to remove a competitor at an auction, who would sink the price of a rarity at the expense of truth, and whom it is not safe to trust alone in a library or cabinet. These are faults, which the fraternity seem to look upon as jocular mischiefs, or to think excused by the violence of the temptation: but I shall always fear that he, who accustoms himself to fraud in little things, wants only opportunity to practise in greater; "he that has hardened himself by killing a sheep," says Pythagoras, "will with less reluctance shed the blood of a man."

To prize every thing according to its *real* use ought to be the aim of a rational being. There are few things which can much conduce to happiness, and, therefore, few things to be ardently desired. He that looks upon the business and bustle of the world, with the philosophy with which Socrates surveyed the fair of Athens, will turn away at last with his exclamation, "How many things are here which I do not want."

Numb. 120. Saturday, December 29, 1753.

.....Ultima semper
Expectanda dies homini, dicique beatus
Ante obitum nemo supremaque funera debet. Ovid.

But no frail man, however great or high,
Can be concluded blest before he die. Addison.

The numerous miseries of human life have extorted in all ages an universal complaint. The wisest of men terminated

all his experiments in search of happiness, by the mournful confession, that "all is vanity;" and the ancient patriarchs lamented, that "the days of their pilgrimage were few and evil."

There is, indeed, no topic on which it is more superfluous to accumulate authorities, nor any assertion of which our own eyes will more easily discover, or our sensations more frequently impres[illegible]t misery is the lot of man, that our presen[illegible] danger and infelicity.

When we tak[illegible] prospect of life, what does it present to u[illegible] happiness, a confused and tumultuous sce[illegible]ntest, disappointment and defeat? If w[illegible] the reflection of history, what do they o[illegible]n but crimes and calamities? One year [illegible]y a famine, another by an earthquake; k[illegible] desolate, sometimes by wars, and some[illegible]; the peace of the world is interrupted at on[illegible]aprices of a tyrant, at another by the rage of a conqueror. The memory is stored only with the vicissitudes of evil; and the happiness, such as it is, of one part of mankind, is found to arise commonly from sanguinary success, from victories which confer upon them the power, not so much of improving life by any new enjoyment, as of inflicting misery on others, and gratifying their own pride by comparative greatness.

But by him that examines life with a more close attention, the happiness of the world will be found still less than it appears. In some intervals of public prosperity, or to use terms more proper, in some intermissions of calamity, a general diffusion of happiness may seem to overspread a people; all is triumph and exultation, jollity and plenty; there are no public fears and dangers, and "no complainings in the streets." But the condition of individuals is very little mended by this general calm: pain and malice and discontent still continue their havoc; the silent depredation goes incessantly forward: and the grave continues to be filled by the victims of sorrow.

He that enters a gay assembly, beholds the cheerfulness displayed in every countenance, and finds all sitting vacant and disengaged, with no other attention than to give or to receive pleasure, would naturally imagine, that he had reached at last the metropolis of felicity, the place sacred to gladne[illegible] heart, from whence all fear and anxiety were irreversibly [illegible]cluded. Such, indeed, we may often find to be the opini[illegible] those, who from a lower station look up to the pomp[illegible] gaiety which they cannot reach: but who is there of those[illegible]

frequent luxurious assemblies, that will not confess his own uneasiness, or cannot recount the vexations and distresses that prey upon the lives of his gay companions?

The world, in its best state, is nothing more than a larger assembly of beings, combining to counterfeit happiness which they do not feel, employing every art and contrivance to embellish life, and to hide their real condition from the eyes of one another.

The species of happiness most obvious to the observation of others, is that which depends upon the goods of fortune; yet even this is often fictitious. There is in the world more poverty than is generally imagined: not only because many whose possessions are large have desires still larger, and many measure their wants by the gratifications which others enjoy: but great numbers are pressed by real necessities which it is their chief ambition to conceal, and are forced to purchase the appearance of competence and cheerfulness at the expense of many comforts and conveniences of life.

Many, however, are confessedly rich, and many more are sufficiently removed from all danger of real poverty: but it has been long ago remarked, that money cannot purchase quiet; the highest of mankind can promise themselves no exemption from that discord or suspicion, by which the sweetness of domestic retirement is destroyed; and must always be even more exposed, in the same degree as they are elevated above others, to the treachery of dependents, the calumny of defamers, and the violence of opponents.

Affliction is inseparable from our present state; it adheres to all the inhabitants of this world, in different proportions indeed, but with an allotment which seems very little regulated by our own conduct. It has been the boast of some swelling moralists, that every man's fortune was in his own power, that prudence supplied the place of all other divinities, and that happiness is the unfailing consequence of virtue. But, surely, the quiver of Omnipotence is stored with arrows, against which the shield of human virtue, however adamantine it has been boasted, is held up in vain: we do not always suffer by our crimes; we are not always protected by our innocence.

A good man is by no means exempt from the danger of suffering by the crimes of others; even his goodness may raise him enemies of implacable malice and restless perseverance: the good man has never been warranted by Heaven from the treachery of friends, the disobedience of children, or the dishonesty of a wife; he may see his cares made useless by profusion, his instructions defeated by perverseness,

and his kindness rejected by ingratitude; he may languish under the infamy of false accusations, or perish reproachfully by an unjust sentence.

A good man is subject, like other mortals, to all the influences of natural evil; his harvest is not spared by the tempest, nor his cattle by the murrain; his house flames like others in a conflagration; nor have his ships any peculiar power of resisting hurric[illegible] however elevated, inhabits a body subject to [illegible]ualties, of which he must always share the [illegible] pains; he bears about him the seeds of disea[illegible]er away a great part of his life under the to[illegible]r stone; at one time groaning with insuffe[illegible] another dissolved in listlessness and langu[illegible]

From this gen[illegible]inate distribution of misery, the moralist [illegible]ived one of their strongest moral argument[illegible]te; for since the common events of the present life happen alike to the good and bad, it follows from the justice of the Supreme Being, that there must be another state of existence, in which a just retribution shall be made, and every man shall be happy and miserable according to his works.

The miseries of life may, perhaps, afford some proof of a future state, compared as well with the mercy as the justice of God. It is scarcely to be imagined, that infinite benevolece would create a being capable of enjoying so much more than is here to be enjoyed, and qualified by nature to prolong pain by remembrance, and anticipate it by terrour, if he was not designed for something nobler and better than a state, in which many of his faculties can serve only for his torment; in which he is to be importuned by desires that never can be satisfied, to feel many evils which he had no power to avoid, and to fear many which he shall never feel: there will surely come a time, when every capacity of happiness shall be filled, and none shall be wretched but by his own fault.

In the mean time, it is by affliction chiefly that the heart of man is purified, and that the thoughts are fixed upon a better state. Prosperity, allayed and imperfect as it is, has power to intoxicate the imagination, to fix the mind upon the present scene, to produce confidence and elation, and to make him who enjoys affluence and honours, forget the hand by which they were bestowed. It is seldom that we are otherwise than by affliction, awakened to a sense of our own imbecility, or taught to know how little all our acquisitions can conduce to safety or to quiet; and how justly we may

cribe to the superintendence of a higher power, those blessings which in the wantonness of success we considered as the attainments of our policy or courage.

Nothing confers so much ability to resist the temptations that perpetually surround us, as an habitual consideration of the shortness of life, and the uncertainty of those pleasures that solicit our pursuit; and this consideration can be inculcated only by affliction. "O Death! how bitter is the remembrance of thee, to a man that lives at ease in his possessions!" If our present state were one continued succession of delights, or one uniform flow of calmness and tranquillity, we should never willingly think upon its end; death would then surely surprise us as "a thief in the night;" and our task of duty would remain unfinished, till "the night came when no man can work."

While affliction thus prepares us for felicity, we may console ourselves under its pressures, by remembering that they are no particular marks of divine displeasure; since all the distresses of persecution have been suffered by those, "of whom the world was not worthy; and the Redeemer of mankind himself was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief."

NUMB. 126. SATURDAY, January 19, 1754.

.....Steriles nec legit arenas
Ut caneret paucis meritque hoc pulvere verum. LUCAN

Canst thou believe the vast eternal mind
Was e'er to Syrts and Lybian sands confin'd?
That he would choose this waste, this barren ground,
To teach the thin inhabitants around,
And leave his truth in wilds and deserts drown'd?

THERE has always prevailed among that part of mankind that addict their minds to speculation, a propensity to talk much of the delight of retirement; and some of the most pleasing compositions produced in every age contain descriptions of the peace and happiness of a country life.

I know not whether those who thus ambitiously repeat the praises of solitude, have always considered, how much they depreciate mankind by declaring, that whatever is excellent or desirable is to be obtained by departing from them: that the assistance which we may derive from one another, is not equivalent to the evils which we have to fear: that the kind-

ness of a few, is overbalanced by the malice of many; and that the protection of society is too dearly purchased by encountering its dangers, and enduring its oppressions.

These specious representations of solitary happiness, however opprobrious to human nature, have so far spread their influence over the world, that almost every man delights his imagination with the hopes of obtaining some time an opportunity of retreat [illegible] who enjoy retreat only in imagination, co[illegible] with believing that another year will transp[illegible] tranquillity, and die while they talk of doin[illegible] d lived longer, they would never have don[illegible] ewise there are, either of greater resolutio[illegible] ty, who in earnest try the state which they [illegible] to think thus secure from cares and dang[illegible] privacy, either that they may improve t[illegible] rease their knowledge, or exalt their virtu[illegible]

The greater part of the admirers of solitude, as of all other classes of mankind, have no higher or remoter view, than the present gratification of their passions. Of these, some haughty and impetuous, fly from society only because they cannot bear to repay to others the regard which themselves exact; and think no state of life eligible, but that which places them out of the reach of censure or control, and affords them opportunities of living in a perpetual compliance with their own inclinations, without the necessity of regulating their actions by any other man's convenience or opinion.

There are others, of minds more delicate and tender, easily offended by every deviation from rectitude, soon disgusted by ignorance or impertinence, and always expecting from the conversation of mankind, more elegance, purity and truth, than the mingled mass of life will easily afford. Such men are in haste to retire from grossness, falsehood and brutality; and hope to find in private habitations at least a negative felicity, an exemption from the shocks and perturbations with which public scenes are continually distressing them.

To neither of these votaries will solitude afford that content, which she has been taught so lavishly to promise. The man of arrogance will quickly discover, that by escaping from his opponents he has lost his flatterers, that greatness is nothing where it is not seen, and power nothing whe[illegible] cannot be felt: and he, whose faculties are employed i[illegible] close an observation of failings and defects, will find his [illegible]dition very little mended by transferring his attention f[illegible] others to himself; he will probably soon come back in q[illegible]

of new objects, and be glad to keep his captiousness employed on any character rather than his own.

Others are seduced into solitude the merely by authority of great names, and expect to find those charms in tranquillity which have allured statesmen and conquerors to the shades: these are likewise apt to wonder at their disappointment, for want of considering, that those whom they aspire to imitate carried with them to their country seats minds full fraught with subjects of reflection, the consciousness of great merit, the memory of illustrious actions, the knowledge of important events, and the seeds of mighty designs to be ripened by future meditation. Solitude was to such men a release from fatigue, and an opportunity of usefulness. But what can retirement confer upon him, who having done nothing, can receive no support from his own importance, who having known nothing can find no entertainment in reviewing the past, and who intending nothing can form no hopes from prospects of the future? He can, surely, take no wiser course than that of losing himself again in the crowd, and filling the vacuities of his mind with the news of the day.

Others consider solitude as the parent of philosophy, and retire in expectation of greater intimacies with science, as Numa repaired to the groves when he conferred with Egeria. These men have not always reason to repent. Some studies require a continued prosecution of the same train of thought, such as is too often intterrupted by the petty avocations of common life: sometimes, likewise, it is necessary that a multiplicity of objects be at once present to the mind; and every thing, therefore, must be kept at a distance, which may perplex the memory, or dissipate the attention.

But though learning may be conferred by solitude, its application must be attained by general converse. He has learned to no purpose, that is not able to teach; and he will always teach unsuccessfully, who cannot recommend his sentiment by his diction or address.

Even the acquisition of knowledge is often much facilitated by the advantages of society: he that never compares his notions with those of others, readily acquiesces in his first thoughts, and very seldom discovers the objections which may be raised against his opinions; he, therefore, often thinks himself in possession of truth, when he is only fondling an error long since exploded. He that has neither companions nor rivals in his studies, will always applaud his own progress, and think highly of his performances, because he knows not that others have equalled or excelled him. And I am afraid it may be added, that the student who withdraws

himself from the world, will soon feel that ardour extinguished which praise or emulation had enkindled, and take the advantage of secresy to sleep, rather than to labour.

There remains yet another set of recluses, whose intention entitles them to higher respect, and whose motives deserve a more serious consideration. These retire from the world, not merely to bask in ease or gratify curiosity; but that being disengaged from common cares, they may employ more time in the duties of religion: that they may regulate their actions with stricter vigilance, and purify their thoughts by more frequent meditation.

To men thus elevated above the mists of mortality, I am far from presuming myself qualified to give directions. On him that appears "to pass through things temporary," with no other care "than not to lose finally the things eternal," I look with such veneration as inclines me to approve his conduct in the whole, without a minute examination of its parts; yet I could never forbear to wish, that while vice is every day multiplying seducements, and stalking forth with more hardened effrontery, virtue would not withdraw the influence of her presence, or forbear to assert her natural dignity by open and undaunted perseverance in the right. Piety practised in solitude, like the flower that blooms in the desert, may give its fragrance to the winds of Heaven, and delight those unbodied spirits that survey the works of God and the actions of men; but it bestows no assistance upon earthly beings, and however from taints of impurity, yet wants the sacred splendour of beneficence.

Our Maker, who thought he gave us such varieties of temper and such difference of powers, yet designed us all for happiness, undoubtedly intended that we should obtain happiness by different means. Some are unable to resist the temptations of importunity, or the impetuosity of their own passions incited by the force of present tempations: of these it is undoubtedly the duty to fly from enemies which they cannot conquer, and cultivate in the calm of solitude, that virtue which is too tender to endure the tempests of public life. But there are others, whose passions grow more strong and irregular in privacy; and who cannot maintain an uniform tenor of virtue, but by exposing their manners to the public eye, and assisting the admonitions of conscience with the fear of infamy: for such it is dangerous to exclude all witnesses of their conduct, till they have formed strong habits of virtue, and weakened their passions by frequent victories. But there is a higher order of men so inspired with ardour, and so fortified with resolution, that the world passes

before them without influence or regard: these ought to consider themselves as appointed the guardians of mankind: they are placed in an evil world, to exhibit public examples of good life: and may be said, when they withdraw to solitude, to desert the station which Providence assigned them.

Numb. 128. Saturday, January 26, 1754.

Ille sinistrorsum, hic dextrorsum abit; unus utrique
Error, sed variis illudit partibus. Hor.

When in a wood we leave the certain way,
One error fools us, though we various stray,
Some to the left, and some to t'other side. Francis.

It is common among all the classes of mankind, to charge each other with trifling away life: every man looks on the occupation or amusement of his neighbour, as something below the dignity of our nature, and unworthy of the attention of a rational being.

A man who considers the paucity of the wants of nature, and who being acquainted with the various means by which all manual occupations are now facilitated, observes what numbers are supported by the labour of a few, would, indeed, be inclined to wonder, how the multitudes who are exempted from the necessity of working either for themselves or others, find business to fill up the vacuities of life. The greater part of mankind neither card the fleece, dig the mine, fell the wood, nor gather in the harvest; they neither tend to herds nor build houses; in what then are they employed?

This is certainly a question, which a distant prospect of the world will not enable us to answer. We find all ranks and ages mingled together in a tumultuous confusion, with haste in their motions, and eagerness in their looks; but what they have to pursue or avoid, a more minute observation must inform them.

When we analyse the crowd into individuals, it soon appears that the passions and imaginations of men will not easily suffer them to be idle: we see things coveted merely because they are rare, and pursued because they are fugitive: we see men conspire to fix an arbitrary value on that which is worthless in itself, and then contend for the possession. One is a collector of fossils, of which he knows no other use than to show them; and when he has stocked his own repository, grieves that the stones which he has left behind him

should be picked up by another. The florist nurses a tulip, and repines that his rival's beds enjoy the same showers and sunshine with his own. This man is hurrying to a concert, only lest others should have heard the new musician before him; another burts from his company to the play, because he fancies himself the patron of an actress; some spend the morning in consultations with their tailor, and some in directions to their cook: s arties for cards, and some laying wagers;

It cannot, I at some of these lives are passed in trifl by which the busy neither benefit themsel by which no man could be long engaged, idered what he was doing, or had knowl pare what he is with what he might be m people who have the same inclination gen er, every triller is kept in countenance by s as unprofitably active as himself; by kinuing the lea competition, he in time thinks himself important, and by having his mind intensely engaged, he is secured from weariness of himself.

Some degree of self-approbation is always the reward of diligence; and I cannot, therefore, but consider the laborious cultivation of petty pleasures, as a more happy and more virtuous disposition, that that universal contempt and haughty negligence, which is sometimes associated with powerful faculties, but is often assumed by indolence when it disowns its name, and aspires to the appellation of greatness of mind.

It has been long observed, that drollery and ridicule is the most easy kind of wit: let it be added, that contempt and arrogance is the easiest philosophy. To find some objection to every thing, and to dissolve in perpetual laziness under pretence that occasions are wanting to call forth activity, to laugh at those who are ridiculously busy without setting an example of more rational industry, is no less in the power of the meanest than of the highest intellects.

Our present state has placed us at once in such different relations, that every human employment, which is not a visible and immediate act of goodness, will be in some respect or other subject to contempt; but it is true, likewise, that almost every act, which is not directly vicious, is in some respect beneficial and laudable. "I often," says Bruy "observe from my window, two beings of erect form amiable countenance, endowed with the powers of rea able to clothe their thoughts in language, and convey t notions to each other. They rise early in the morni

are every day employed till sunset in rubbing two smooth stones together, or, in other terms, in polishing marble."

"If lions could paint," says the fable, "in the room of those pictures which exhibit men vanquishing lions, we should see lions feeding upon men." If the stone-cutter could have written like Bruyere, what would he have replied?

"I look up," says he, "every day from my shop, upon a man whom the idlers, who stand still to gaze upon my work, often celebrate as a wit and a philosopher. I often perceive his face clouded with care, and am told that his taper is sometimes burning at midnight. The sight of a man who works so much harder than myself, excited my curiosity. I heard no sound of tools in his apartment, and, therefore, could not imagine what he was doing; but was told at last, that he was writing descriptions of mankind, who when he had described them would live just as they had lived before; that he sat up whole nights to change a sentence, because the sound of a letter was too often repeated; that he was often disquieted with doubts, about the propriety of a word which every body understood; that he would hesitate between two expressions equally proper, till he could not fix his choice but by consulting his friends; that he will run from one end of Paris to the other, for an opportunity of reading a period to a nice ear; that if a single line is heard with coldness and inattention, he returns home dejected and disconsolate; and by all this care and labour, he hopes only to make a little book, which at last will teach no useful art, and which none who has it not will perceive himself to want. I have often wondered for what end such a being as this was sent into the world; and should be glad to see those who live thus foolishly, seized by an order of the government, and obliged to labour at some useful occupation."

Thus, by a partial and imperfect representation, may every thing be made equally ridiculous. He that gazed with contempt on human beings rubbing stones together, might have prolonged the same amusement by walking through the city, and seeing others with looks of importance heaping one brick upon another; or by rambling into the country, where he might observe other creatures of the same kind driving in a piece of sharp iron into the clay, or in the language of men less enlightened, ploughing the field.

As it is thus easy by a detail of minute circumstances to make every thing little, so it is not difficult by an aggregation of effects to make every thing great. The polisher of marble may be forming ornaments for the palaces of virtue, and the schools of science; or providing tables on which the actions

of heros and the discoveries of sages shall be recorded, for the incitement and instruction of future generations. The mason is exercising one of the principal arts by which reasoning beings are distinguished from the brute, the art to which life owes much of its safety and all its convenience, by which we are secured from the inclemency of the seasons, and fortified against the ravages of hostility; and the ploughman is changi[illegible], diffusing plenty and happiness over ki[illegible]ling the earth to give food to her inhabita[illegible]

Greatness a[illegible]rms merely comparative; and we err in [illegible]hings, because we measure them by some w[illegible]he trifler proposes to himself only to eq[illegible]ther trifler, and is happy or miserable a[illegible]carries: the man of sedentary desire and [illegible] sits comparing his power with his wishes [illegible]nability to perform things impossible, an excuse to himself for performing nothing. Man can only form a just estimate of his own actions, by making his power the test of his performance, by comparing what he does with what he can do. Whoever steadily perseveres in the exertion of all his faculties, does what is great with respect to himself; and what will not be despised by Him, who has given to all created beings their different abilities: he faithfully performs the task of life, within whatever limits his labours may be confined, or how soon soever they may be forgotten.

We can conceive so much more than we can accomplish, that whoever tries his own actions by his imagination, may appear despicable in his own eyes. He that despises for its littleness any thing really useful, has no pretensions to applaud the grandeur of his conceptions; since nothing but narrowness of mind hinders him from seeing, that by pursuing the same principles every thing limited will appear contemptible.

He that neglects the care of his family, while his benevolence expands itself in scheming the happiness of imaginary kingdoms, might with equal reason sit on a throne dreaming of universal empire, and of the diffusion of blessings over all the globe: yet even this globe is little, compared with the system of matter within our view! and that system barely something more than nonentity, compared with the bounu[illegible]gions of space, to which neither eye nor imagination extend.

From conceptions, therefore, of what we might hav[illegible] and from wishes to be what we are not, conceptions tu[illegible]

know to be foolish, and wishes which we feel to be vain, we must necessarily descend to the consideration of what we are. We have powers very scanty in their utmost extent, but which in different men are differently proportioned. Suitably to these powers we have duties prescribed, which we must neither decline for the sake of delighting ourselves with easier amusements, nor overlook in idle contemplation of greater excellence or more extensive comprehension.

In order to the right conduct of our lives, we must remember that we are not born to please ourselves. He that studies simply his own satisfaction, will always find the proper business of his station too hard or too easy for him. But if we bear continually in mind, our relation to The Father of Being, by whom we are placed in the world, and who has allotted us the part which we are to bear in the general system of life, we shall be easily persuaded to resign our own inclinations to Unerring Wisdom, and do the work decreed for us with cheerfulness and diligence.

Numb. 131. Tuesday, February 5, 1754.

——— ——— ———*Misce*
Ergo aliquid nostris de moribus. Juvenal.

And mingle something of our times to please.
Dryden Jun.

Fontenelle, in his panegyric on Sir Isaac Newton, closes a long enumeration of that great philosopher's virtues and attainments, with an observation, that "he was not distinguished from other men, by any singularity either natural or affected."

It is an eminent instance of Newton's superiority to the rest of mankind, that he was able to separate knowledge from those weaknesses by which knowledge is generally disgraced; that he was able to excel in science and wisdom, without purchasing them by the neglect of little things; and that he stood alone, merely because he had left the rest of mankind behind him, not because he deviated from the beaten track.

Whoever, after the example of Plutarch, should compare the lives of illustrious men, might set this part of Newton's character to view with great advantage, by opposing it to that of Bacon, perhaps the only man of latter ages, who has any pretensions to dispute with him the palm of genius or science.

Bac after he had added to a long and careful conte
tion of lmost every other object of knowledge a curio
specfio nto common life, and after having surveyed n
as a ph sopher, had examined "men's business and bos
as a st sman; yet failed so much in the conduct of d
tic aff , that, in the most lucrative post to which a
and we hy kingdom could advance him, he felt all th
series c and committed all the crin
which p were at once his negligenc
rapacit e would gain by unworthy
tices th so acquired, his servants
steal fr , while he sat studious an
stractea
As sc eached the excellence, ver
have su Bacon: but almost all th
dious t participation of his knowl
feel lik of his defects; and obstru
veneration which learning would procure, by follies gr
or less, to which only learning could betray them.

It has been formerly remarked by "The Guardian," the world punishes with too great severity the errors of t who imagine that the ignorance of little things may be pensated by the knowledge of great; for so it is, that as can detect petty failings than can distinguish or esteem qualifications, and as mankind is in general more easil posed to censure than to admiration, contempt is often i red by slight mistakes, which real virtue or usefulness c counterbalance.

Yet such mistakes and inadvertencies, it is not easy man deeply immersed in study to avoid; no man can be qualified for the common intercourses of life, by privat ditation; the manners of the world are not a regular sy planned by philosophers upon settled principles, in every cause has a congruous effect, and one part has a ju ference to another. Of the fashions prevalent in every try, a few have arisen, perhaps, from particular temper of the climate; a few more from the constitution of the ernment; but the greater part have grown up by ch been started by caprice, been contrived by affectatio borrowed without any just motives of choice from other tries.

Of all these, the savage that haunts his prey upo mountains, and the sage that speculates in his closet, necessarily live in equal ignorance; yet by the observ of these trifles it is, that the ranks of mankind are k order, that the address of one to another is regulated

the general business of the world carried on with facility and method.

These things, therefore, though small in themselves, become great by their frequency; and he very much mistakes his own interest, who, to the unavoidable unskilfulness of abstraction and retirement, adds a voluntary neglect of common forms, and increases the disadvantages of a studious course of life by an arrogant contempt of those practices, by which others endeavour to gain favour and multiply friendships.

A real and interior disdain of fashion and ceremony is, indeed, not very often to be found: much the greater part of those who pretend to laugh at foppery and formality, secretly wish to have possessed those qualifications which they pretend to despise; and because they find it difficult to wash away the tincture which they have so deeply imbibed, endeavour to harden themselves in a sullen approbation of their own colour. Neutrality is a state, into which the busy passions of man cannot easily subside; and he who is in danger of the pangs of envy, is generally forced to recreate his imagination with an effort of comfort.

Some, however, may be found, who, supported by the consciousness of great abilities, and elevated by a long course of reputation and applause, voluntarily consign themselves to singularity, affect to cross the roads of life because they know that they shall not be jostled, and indulge a boundless gratification of will because they perceive that they shall be quietly obeyed. Men of this kind are generally known by the name of humourists, an appellation by which he that has obtained it, and can be contented to keep it, is set free at once from the shackles of fashion: and can go in or out, sit or stand, be talkative or silent, gloomy or merry, advance absurdities or oppose demonstration, without any other reprehension from mankind, than that it is his way, that he is an odd fellow, and must be let alone.

This seems to many an easy passport through the various factions of mankind; and those on whom it is bestowed, appear too frequently to consider the patience with which their caprices are suffered as an undoubted evidence of their own importance, of a genius to which submission is universally paid, and whose irregularities are only considered as consequences of its vigour. These peculiarities however, are always found to spot a character, though they may not totally obscure it; and he who expects from mankind, that they should give up established customs in compliance with his single will; and exacts that deference which he does not pay, may be endured, but can never be approved.

Singularity is, I think, in its own nature universally and invariably displeasing. In whatever respect a man differs from others, he must be considered by them as either worse or better; by being better, it is well known that a man gains admiration oftener than love, since all approbation of his practice must necessarily condemn him that gives it; and though a man often pleases by inferiority, there are few who desire to give such pleasure. Yet the truth is, that singu-
larity is almos as a brand of slight re-
proach; and wh l with acknowledged merit,
serves as an aba , of excellence, by which
weak eyes are r tre, and by which, though
kindness is ne vy is averted.

But let no conclude his own merit so
great or consp e or justify singularity: it
is as hazardou nderstanding to usurp the
prerogatives o nmon form to play over the
airs of unconte ..... pride of men will not patiently endure to see one, whose understanding or attainments are but level with their own, break the rules by which they have consented to be bound, or forsake the direction which they submissively follow. All violation of established practice implies in its own nature a rejection of the common opinion, a defiance of common censure, and an appeal from general laws to private judgment: he, therefore, who differs from others without apparent advantage ought not to be angry if his arrogance is punished with ridicule; if those, whose example he superciliously overlooks, point him out to derision, and hoot him back again into the common road.

The pride of singularity is often exerted in little things, where right and wrong are indeterminable, and where, therefore, vanity is without excuse. But there are occasions on which it is noble to dare to stand alone. To be pious among infidels, to be disinterested in a time of general venality, to lead a life of virtue and reason in the midst of sensualists, is a proof of a mind intent on nobler things than the praise or blame of men, of a soul fixed in the contemplation of the highest good, and superior to the tyranny of custom and example.

In moral and religious questions only, a wise man will hold no consultations with fashion, because these duties are constant and immutable, and depend not on the notions of men, but the commands of heaven: yet even of these the external mode is to be in some measure regulated by the prevailing taste of the age in which we live; for he is certainly

no friend to virtue, who neglects to give it any lawful attraction, or suffers it to deceive the eye or alienate the affection for want of innocent compliance with fashionable decorations.

It is yet remembered of the learned and pious Nelson, that he was remarkably elegant in his manners, and splendid in his dress. He knew, that the eminence of his character drew many eyes upon him; and he was careful not to drive the young or the gay away from religion, by representing it as an enemy to any distinction or enjoyment in which human nature may innocently delight.

In this censure of singularity, I have, therefore, no intention to subject reason or conscience to custom or example. To comply with the notions and practices of mankind, is in some degree the duty of a social being; because by compliance only he can please, and by pleasing only he can become useful: but as the end is not to be lost for the sake of the means, we are not to give up virtue to complaisance; for the end of complaisance is only to gain the kindness of our fellow beings, whose kindness is desirable only as instrumental to happiness, and happiness must be always lost by departure from virtue.

Numb. 137. Tuesday, February 26, 1754.

Τί δ' ἐρέξα. Pyth.

What have I been doing?

As man is a being very sparingly furnished with the power of prescience, he can provide for the future only by considering the past; and as futurity is all in which he has any real interest, he ought very diligently to use the only means by which he can be enabled to enjoy it, and frequently to revolve the experiments which he has hitherto made upon life, that he may gain wisdom from his mistakes, and caution from his miscarriages.

Though I do not so exactly conform to the precepts of Pythagoras, as to practise every night this solemn recollection, yet I am not so lost in dissipation as wholly to omit it; nor can I forbear sometimes to inquire of myself, in what employment my life has passed away. Much of my time has sunk into nothing, and left no trace by which it can be distin-

guished; a d of this I now only know, that it was once in my power, and might once have been improved.

Of other parts of life, memory can give some account; at some hours I have been gay, and at others serious; I have sometimes mingled in conversation, and sometimes meditated in solitude; one day has been spent in consulting the ancient sages, and another in writing Adventurers.

At the conclusion of any undertaking, it is usual to compute the loss and [illegible] soon cease to write Adventurers, I coul[illegible] consider what has been the consequence [illegible] whether I am to reckon the hours laid o[illegible]ns, as applied to a good and laudable pur[illegible]me away in useless evaporations.

That I hav[illegible] have the attestation of my own heart: [illegible]ay be frustrated when they are executed [illegible], or directed to an end unattainable in its [illegible]

Some there are who leave writers very little room for self-congratulation; some who affirm, that books have no influence upon the public, that no age was ever made better by its authors, and that to call upon mankind to correct their manners, is like Xerxes, to scourge the wind, or shackle the torrent.

This opinion they pretend to support by unfailing experience. The world is full of fraud and corruption, rapine and malignity; interest is the ruling motive of mankind, and every one is endeavouring to increase his own stores of happiness by perpetual accumulations, without reflecting upon the numbers whom his superfluity condemns to want: in this state of things a book of morality is published, in which charity and benevolence are strongly enforced; and it is proved beyond opposition, that men are happy in proportion as they are virtuous, and rich as they are liberal. The book is applauded, and the author is preferred; he imagines his applause deserved, and receivs less pleasure from the acquisition of reward than the consciousness of merit. Let us look again upon mankind: interest is still the ruling motive, and the world is yet full of fraud and corruption, malevolence and rapine.

The difficulty of confuting this assertion, arises merely from its generality and comprehension: to overthrow it by a detail of distinct facts, requires a wider survey of the w[illegible] than human eyes can take; the progress of reformation is gradual and silent, as the extension of evening shadows; we know that they were short at noon, and are long at sunset, but our senses were not able to discern their increase: we know of

every civil nation, that it was once savage, and how was it reclaimed but by precept and admonition?

Mankind are universally corrupt, but corrupt in different degrees; as they are universally ignorant, yet with greater or less irradiations of knowledge. How has knowledge or virtue been increased and preserved in one place beyond another; but by diligent inculcation and rational enforcement.

Books of morality are daily written, yet its influence is still little in the world; so the ground is annually ploughed, and yet multitudes are yet in want of bread. But, surely, neither the labours of the moralist nor of the husbandman are vain; let them for a while neglect their tasks, and their usefulness will be known; the wickedness that is now frequent would become universal, the bread that is now scarce would wholly fail.

The power, indeed, of every individual is small, and the consequence of his endeavours imperceptible in a general prospect of the world. Providence has given no man ability to do much, that something might be left for every man to do. The business of life is carried on by a general co-operation; in which the part of any single man can be no more distinguished, than the effect of a particular drop when the meadows are floated by a summer shower: yet every drop increases the inundation, and every hand adds to the happiness or misery of mankind.

That a writer, however zealous or eloquent, seldom works a visible effect upon cities or nations, will readily be granted. The book which is read most, is read by few, compared with those that read it not; and of those few, the greater part peruse it with dispositions that very little favour their own improvement.

It is difficult to enumerate the several motives which procure to books the honour of perusal: spite, vanity, and curiosity, hope and fear, love and hatred, every passion which incites to any other action serves at one time or other to stimulate a reader.

Some are fond to take a celebrated volume into their hands, because they hope to distinguish their penetration, by finding faults which have escaped the public; others eagerly buy it in the first bloom of reputation, that they may join the chorus of praise, and not lag, as Falstaff terms it, in "the rearward of the fashion."

Some read for style, and some for argument; one has little care about the sentiment, he observes only how it is expressed; another regards not the conclusion, but is diligent to

mark how it is inferred: they read for other purposes than the attainment of practical knowledge; and are no more likely to grow wise by an examination of a treatise of moral prudence than an architect to inflame his devotion by considering attentively the proportions of a temple.

Some read that they may embellish their conversation, or shine in dispute; some that they may not be detected in ignorance, or wan[illegible] f literary accomplishments: but the most [illegible] ent reason of study is the impossibility [illegible] nusement equally cheap or constant, equa[illegible] the hour or the weather. He that wants [illegible] chase of pleasure through her yearly cir[illegible] home when the gay world rolls to Bath [illegible] whose gout compels him to hear from his c[illegible] le of chariots transporting happier beings [illegible] emblies, will be forced to seek in books a[illegible] lf.

The author is not wholly useless, who provides innocent amusements for minds like these. There are in the present state of things, so many more instigations to evil, than incitements to good, that he who keeps men in a neutral state, may be justly considered as a benefactor to life.

But, perhaps, it seldom happens, that study terminates in mere pastime. Books have always a secret influence on the understanding; we cannot at pleasure obliterate ideas: he that reads books of science, though without any fixed desire of improvement, will grow more knowing; he that entertains himself with moral or religious treatises, will imperceptibly advance in goodness; the ideas which are often offered to the mind, will at last find a lucky moment when it is disposed to receive them.

It is, therefore, urged without reason, as a discouragement to writers, that there are already books sufficient in the world; that all the tropics of persuasion have been discussed, and every important question clearly stated and justly decided; and that, therefore, there is no room to hope that pigmies should conquer where heros have been defeated, or that the petty copiers of the present time should advance the great work of reformation, which their predecessors were forced to leave unfinished.

Whatever be the present extent of human knowledge, it is not only finite, and therefore in its own nature capable of increase; but so narrow, that almost every understanding may, by a diligent application of its powers, hope to enlarge it. It is, however, not necessary, that a man should forbear to write, till he has discovered some truth unknown before; he

may be sufficiently useful, by only diversifying the surface of knowledge, and luring the minds by a new appearance to a second view of those beauties which it had passed over inattentively before. Every writer may find intellects correspondent to his own, to whom his expressions are familiar and his thoughts congenial: and, perhaps, truth is often more successfully propagated by men of moderate abilities, who adopting the opinions of others, have no care but to explain them clearly, than by subtle speculatists and curious searchers, who exact from their readers powers equal to their own, and if their fabrics of science be strong, take no care to make them accessible.

For my part, I do not regret the hours which I have laid out in these little compositions. That the world has grown apparently better, since the publication of the Adventurer, I have not observed; but am willing to think, that many have been affected by single sentiments, of which it is their business to renew the impression: that many have caught hints of truth, which it is now their duty to pursue; and that those who have received no improvement, have wanted no opportunity but intention to improve.

Numb. 138. Saturday, March 2, 1754.

Quid pure tranquillet? honos, an dulce lucellum,
An secretum iter, et fallentis semita vitæ? Hor.

Whether the tranquil mind and pure,
Honours or wealth our bliss insure;
Or down through life unknown to stray,
Where lonely leads the silent way. Francis.

Having considered the importance of authors to the welfare of the public, I am led by a natural train of thought, to reflect on their condition with regard to themselves; and to inquire what degree of happiness or vexation is annexed to the difficult and laborious employment of providing instruction or entertainment for mankind.

In estimating the pain or pleasure of any particular state, every man, indeed, draws his decisions from his own breast, and cannot with certainty determine, whether other minds are affected by the same causes in the same manner. Yet by this criterion we must be content to judge, because no other can be obtained; and, indeed, we have no reason to think it very fallacious, for excepting here and there an anomalous mind,

which either does not feel like others, or dissembles its sensibility, we find men unanimously concur in attributing happiness or misery to particular conditions, as they agree in acknowledging the cold of winter and the heat of autumn.

If we apply to authors themselves for an account of their state, it will appear very little to deserve envy; for they have in all ages been addicted to complaint. The neglect of learning, the ingr[illegible] age, and the absurd preference by wl[illegible] ullness often obtain favour and rewards, [illegible] to age topics of invective; and few have [illegible] osterity, without some appeal to future [illegible] erverseness and malice of their own tim[illegible]

I have neve[illegible] inclined to doubt, whether authors, how[illegible] in reality more miserable than their fell[illegible] resent life is to all a state of infelicity; [illegible] author, believes himself to merit more than [illegible] olaces the present with the prospect of the future; others, indeed suffer those disappointments in silence, of which the writer complains, to show how well he has learnt the art of lamentation.

There is at least one gleam of felicity, of which few writers have missed the enjoyment: he whose hopes have so far overpowered his fears, as that he has resolved to stand forth a candidate for fame, seldom fails to amuse himself, before his appearance, with pleasing scenes of affluence or honour; while his fortune is yet under the regulation of fancy, he easily models it to his wish, suffers no thoughts of critics or rivals to intrude upon his mind, but counts over the bounties of patronage, or listens to the voice of praise.

Some there are, that talk very luxuriously of the second period of an author's happiness, and tell of the tumultuous raptures of invention, when the mind riots in imagery, and the choice stands suspended between different sentiments.

These pleasures, I believe, may sometimes be indulged to those, who come to a subject of disquisition with minds full of ideas, and with fancies so vigorous, as easily to excite, select, and arrange them. To write is, indeed, no unpleasing employment, when one sentiment readily produces another, and both ideas and expressions present themselves at the first summons: but such happiness, the greatest genius does not always obtain; and common writers know it only to such a degree, as to credit its possibility. Composition is, for the most part, an effort of slow diligence and steady perseverance, to which the mind is dragged by necessity or resolution, and

from which the attention is every moment starting to more delightful amusements.

It frequently happens, that a design which, when considered at a distance, gave flattering hopes of facility, mocks us in the execution with unexpected difficulties; the mind which, while it considered it in the gross, imagined itself amply furnished with materials, finds sometimes an unexpected barrenness and vacuity, and wonders whither all those ideas are vanished, which a little before seemed struggling for emission.

Sometimes many thoughts present themselves; but so confused and unconnected, that they are not without difficulty reduced to method, or concatenated in a regular and dependent series: the mind falls at once into a labyrinth, of which neither the beginning nor end can be discovered, and toils and struggles without progress or extrication.

It is asserted by Horace, that "if matter be once got together, words will be found with very little difficulty;" a position which, though sufficiently plausible to be inserted in poetical precepts, is by no means strictly and philosophically true. If words were naturally and necessarily consequential to sentiments, it would always follow, that he who has most knowledge must have most eloquence, and that every man would clearly express what he fully understood: yet we find, that to think, and discourse, are often the qualities of different persons: and many books might surely be produced, where just and noble sentiments are degraded and obscured by unsuitable diction.

Words, therefore, as well as things, claim the care of an author. Indeed of many authors, and those not useless or contemptible, words are almost the only care: many make it their study, not so much to strike out new sentiments, as to recommend those which are already known to more favourable notice by fairer decorations: but every man, whether he copies or invents, whether he delivers his own thoughts or those of another, has often found himself deficient in the power of expression, big with ideas which he could not utter, obliged to ransack his memory for terms adequate to his conceptions, and at last unable to impress upon his reader the image existing in his own mind.

It is one of the common distresses of a writer, to be within a word of a happy period, to want only a single epithet to give amplification its full force, to require only a correspon-

dent term in order to finish a paragraph with elegance, and make one of its members answer to the other: but these deficiencies cannot always be supplied: and after a long study and vexation, the passage is turned anew, and the web unwoven that was so nearly finished.

But when thoughts and words are collected and adjusted, and the whole composition at last concluded, it seldom gratifies the author [illegible] lly and deliberately to review it, with th[illegible] been excited in the fury of the performanc[illegible] captivates the mind; as our thoughts r[illegible] e readily believe them just and original, [illegible] asure of production is over, we find to be mea[illegible] or borrowed from the works of others, and [illegible] y rather than invention.

But though i[illegible] at the writer finds no such faults in his pe[illegible] s still to remember, that he looks upon it wit[illegible] yes: and when he considers how much men who could judge of others with great exactness, have often failed of judging of themselves, he will be afraid of deciding too hastily in his own favour, or of allowing himself to contemplate with too much complacence, treasure that has not yet been brought to the test, nor passed the only trial that can stamp its value.

From the public, and only from the public, is he to await a confirmation of his claim, and a final justification of self esteem; but the public is not easily persuaded to favour an author. If mankind were left to judge for themselves, it is reasonable to imagine, that of such writings, at least, as describe the movements of the human passions, and of which every man carries the archetype within him, a just opinion would be formed; but whoever has remarked the fate of books, must have found it governed by other causes, than general consent arising from general conviction. If a new performance happens not to fall into the hands of some who have courage to tell, and authority to propagate their opinion, it often remains long in obscurity, and perishes unknown and unexamined. A few, a very few, commonly constitute the taste of the time; the judgment which they have once pronounced, some are too lazy to discuss, and some too timorous to contradict: it may however be, I think, observed, that their power is greater to depress than exalt, as mankind are more credulous of censure than of praise.

This perversion of the public judgment is not to be rashly numbered amongst the miseries of an author; since it com-

manly serves, after miscarriage, to reconcile him to himself. Because the world has sometimes passed an unjust sentence, he readily concludes the sentence unjust by which his performance is condemned; because some have been exalted above their merits by partiality, he is sure to ascribe the success of a rival, not to the merit of his work, but the zeal of his patrons. Upon the whole, as the author seems to share all the common miseries of life, he appears to partake likewise of its lenitives and abatements.

THE

HIST[illegible]ASSELAS,

PRINCE [illegible]ABYSSINIA.

This work was published in March or April, 1759. Dr. JOHNSON wrote it in order to defray the expenses of his mother's funeral, and pay some little debts which she had left. He told Sir Joshua Reynolds that he composed it in the evenings of one week, sent it to the press in portions as it was written, and had never since read it over. Mr. Strahan, Mr. Johnston, and Mr. Dodsley, purchased it for a hundred pounds, but afterwards paid him twenty-five pounds more, when it came to a second edition. None of his writings has been so extensively diffused over Europe: for it has been translated into most, if not all, of the modern languages.

BOSWELL.

CHAPTER I.

DESCRIPTION OF A PALACE IN A VALLEY.

YE who listen with credulity to the whispers of fancy, and pursue with eagerness the phantoms of hope; who expect that age will perform the promises of youth, and that the deficiencies of the present day will be supplied by the morrow; attend to the history of Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia.

Rasselas was the fourth son of the mighty emperor, in whose dominions the Father of Waters begins his course: whose bounty pours down the streams of plenty, and scatters over half the world the harvests of Egypt.

According to the custom which has descended from age to age among the monarchs of the torrid zone, Rasselas was confined in a private palace, with the other sons and daughters of Abyssinian royalty, till the order of succession should call him to the throne.

The place which the wisdom or policy of antiquity had destined for the residence of the Abyssinian princes, was a spacious valley in the kingdom Amhara, surrounded on every side

by mountains, of which the summits overhang the middle part. The only passage, by which it could be entered, was a cavern that passed under a rock, of which it has been long disputed whether it was the work of nature or of human industry. The outlet of the cavern was concealed by thick wood, and the mouth which opened into the valley was closed with gates of iron, forged by the artificers of ancient days, so massy that no man could, without the help of engines, open or shut them.

From the mountains on every side, rivulets descended that filled all the valley with verdure and fertility, and formed a lake in the middle inhabited by fish of every species, and frequented by every fowl whom nature has taught to dip the wing in water. This lake discharged its superfluities by a stream which entered a dark cleft of the mountain on the northern side, and fell with dreadful noise from precipice to precipice till it was heard no more.

The sides of the mountains were covered with trees, the banks of the brooks were diversified with flowers; every blast shook spices from the rocks, and every month dropped fruits upon the ground. All animals that bite the grass, or browse the shrub, whether wild or tame, wandered in this extensive circuit, secured from beasts of prey by the mountains which confined them. On one part were flocks and herds feeding in the pastures, on another all the beasts of chase frisking in the lawns: the sprightly kid was bounding on the rocks, the subtle monkey frolicking in the trees, and the solemn elephant reposing in the shade. All the diversities of the world were brought together, the blessings of nature were collected, and its evils extracted and excluded.

The valley, wide and fruitful, supplied its inhabitants with the necessaries of life; and all delights and superfluities were added at the annual visit which the emperor paid his children, when the iron gate was opened to the sound of music; and during eight days every one that resided in the valley was required to propose whatever might contribute to make seclusion pleasant, to fill up vacancies of attention, and lessen the tediousness of time. Every desire was immediately granted. All the artificers of pleasure were called to gladden the festivity; the musicians exerted the power of harmony, and the dancers showed their activity before the princes, in hope that they should pass their lives in this blissful captivity, to which those only were admitted whose performance was thought able to add novelty to luxury. Such was the appearance of security and delight which this retirement afforded, that they, to whom it was new, always desired that it might

be perpetual; and as those, on whom the iron gate had once closed, were never suffered to return, the effect of long experience could not be known. Thus every year produced new schemes of delight, and new competitors for imprisonment.

The palace stood on an eminence raised about thirty paces above the surface of the lake. It was divided into many squares or courts, built with greater or less magnificence, according to the rank of tho were designed. The roofs were turned int tone, joined by a cement that grew harder by time. lding stood from century to century deridin ins and equinoctial hurricanes, without n

This house, which wa s to be fully known to none but some ancient officer ssively inherited the secrets of the place, was built a n herself had dictated the plan. To every room th n open and secret passage, every square had a commu with the rest, either from the upper stories by private galleries, or by the subterranean passages from the lower apartments. Many of the columns had unsuspected cavities, in which a long race of monarchs had deposited their treasures. They then closed up the opening with marble, which was never to be removed but in the utmost exigencies of the kingdom; and concealed their accumulations in a book, which was itself concealed in a tower not entered but by the emperor, attended by the prince who stood next in succession.

CHAP. II.

THE DISCONTENT OF RASSELAS IN THE HAPPY VALLEY.

Here the sons and daughters of Abyssinia lived only to know the soft vicissitudes of pleasure and repose, attended by all that were skilful to delight, and gratified with whatever the senses can enjoy. They wandered in gardens of fragrance, and slept in the fortresses of security. Every art was practised to make them pleased with their own condition. The sages who instructed them, told them of nothing but the miseries of public life, and described all beyond the mountains as regions of calamity, where discord was always raging, and where man preyed upon man.

To heighten their opinion of their own felicity, they were daily entertained with songs, the subject of which was the *happy valley*. Their appetites were excited by frequent enu-

merations of different enjoyments, and revelry and merriment was the business of every hour from the dawn of morning to the close of even.

These methods were generally successful; few of the princes had ever wished to enlarge their bounds, but passed their lives in full conviction that they had all within their reach that art or nature could bestow, and pitied those whom fate had excluded from this seat of tranquillity, as the sport of chance and the slaves of misery.

Thus they rose in the morning and lay down at night, pleased with each other and with themselves, all but Rasselas, who in the twenty-sixth year of his age, began to withdraw himself from their pastimes and assemblies, and to delight in solitary walks and silent meditation. He often sat before tables covered with luxury, and forgot to taste the dainties that were placed before him; he rose abruptly in the midst of the song, and hastily retired beyond the sound of music. His attendants observed the change, and endeavoured to renew his love of pleasure: he neglected their officiousness, repulsed their invitations, and spent day after day on the banks of rivulets sheltered with trees, where he sometimes listened to the birds in the branches, sometimes observed the fish playing in the stream, and anon cast his eyes upon the pastures and mountains filled with animals, of which some were biting the herbage, and some sleeping among the bushes.

This singularity of his humour made him much observed. One of the Sages in whose conversation he had formerly delighted, followed him secretly, in hope of discovering the cause of his disquiet. Rasselas, who knew not that any one was near him, having for some time fixed his eyes upon the goats that were browsing among the rocks, began to compare their condition with his own.

"What," said he, "makes the difference between man and all the rest of the animal creation? Every beast that strays beside me has the same corporal necessities with myself; he is hungry and crops the grass, he is thirsty and drinks the stream, his thirst and hunger are appeased, he is satisfied and sleeps: he rises again and is hungry, he is again fed and is at rest. I am hungry and thirsty like him, but when thirst and hunger cease I am not at rest; I am, like him, pained with want, but am not, like him, satisfied with fulness. The intermediate hours are tedious and gloomy: I long again to be hungry that I may again quicken my attention. The birds peck the berries or the corn, and fly away to the groves, where they sit in seeming happiness on the branches, and waste their lives in tuning one unvaried series of sounds. I

likewise can call the lutanist and the singer, but the sounds that pleased me yesterday weary me to-day, and will grow yet more wearisome to-morrow. I can discover within me no power of perception which is not glutted with its proper pleasure, yet I do not find myself delighted. Man surely has some latent sense for which this place affords no gratification, or he has some desires distinct from sense, which must be satisfied before he [illegible]

After this he [illegible] nd seeing the moon rising, walked towards [illegible] passed through the fields, and saw the anin [illegible] Ye," said he, "are happy, and need not [illegible] thus among you, burdened with myself; [illegible] eings, envy your felicity; for it is not the f [illegible] ave many distresses from which ye are fre [illegible] I do not feel it; I sometimes shrink at [illegible] l sometimes start at evils anticipated; su [illegible] ovidence has balanced peculiar sufferings with peculiar enjoyments."

With observations like these the prince amused himself as he returned, uttering them with a plaintive voice, yet with a look that discovered him to feel some complacence in his own perspicacity, and to receive some solace of the miseries of life, from consciousness of the delicacy with which he felt, and the eloquence with which he bewailed them. He mingled cheerfully in the diversions of the evening, and all rejoiced to find that his heart was lightened.

CHAP. III.

THE WANTS OF HIM THAT WANTS NOTHING.

On the next day, his old instructor, imagining that he had now made himself acquainted with his disease of mind, was in hope of curing it by counsel, and officiously sought an opportunity of conference, which the prince, having long considered him as one whose intellects were exhausted, was not very willing to afford: "Why," said he, "does this man obtrude upon me? shall I be never suffered to forget those lectures which pleased only while they were new, and to become new again must be forgotten?" He then walked in the wood, and composed himself to his usual meditations; when before his thoughts had taken any settled form, he perceived his pursuer at his side, and was at first prompted by his impatience to go hastily away; but being unwilling

a whom he had reverenced and still loved, he in-
sit down with him on the bank.
nan thus encouraged, began to lament the change
een lately observed in the prince, and to inquire
often retired from the pleasures of the palace to
d silence. "I fly from pleasure," said the prince,
leasure has ceased to please; I am lonely, be-
miserable, and am unwilling to cloud with my
e happiness of others." "You, sir," said the
the first who has complained of misery in the
y. I hope to convince you that your complaints
l cause. You are here in full possession of all
peror of Abyssinia can bestow; here is neither
e endured nor danger to be dreaded, yet here
bour or danger can procure or purchase. Look
tell me which of your wants is without supply:
nothing, how are you unhappy?"
want nothing," said the prince, "or that I know
want, is the cause of my complaint; if I had
want, I should have a certain wish; that wish
e endeavour, and I should not then repine to see
ve so slowly towards the western mountain, or
n the day breaks and sleep will no longer hide me
: When I see the kids and the lambs chasing
, I fancy that I should be happy if I had some-
sue. But possessing all that I can want, I find
hour exactly like another, except that the latter
tedious than the former. Let your experience
how the day may now seem as short as in my
while nature was yet fresh, and every moment
what I never had observed before. I have already
much; give me something to desire."
nan was surprised at this new species of affliction,
ot what to reply, yet was unwilling to be silent.
he, "if you had seen the miseries of the world,
know how to value your present state." "Now,"
nce, "you have given me something to desire: I
o see the miseries of the world, since the sight of
essary to happiness."

CHAP. IV.

PRINCE CONTINUES TO GRIEVE AND MUSE.

ime the sound of music proclaimed the hour of
the conversation was concluded. The old man

went away sufficiently discontented, to find that his reaso
ings had produced the only conclusion which they were i
tended to prevent. But in the decline of life shame an
grief are of short duration; whether it be that we bear easil
what we have born long, or that, finding ourselves in ag
less regarded, we less regard others; or, that we look wi
slight regard upon afflictions, to which we know that t
hand of death is about to put an end.

The prince, whose views were extended to a wider spac
could not speedily quiet his emotions. He had been befo
terrified at the length of life which nature promised him, b
cause he considered that in a long time much must be e
dured; he now rejoiced in his youth, because in many yea
much might be done.

This first beam of hope, that had been ever darted into h
mind, rekindled youth in his cheeks, and doubled the lust
of his eyes. He was fired with the desire of doing somethin
though he knew not yet, with distinctness, either ends o
means.

He was now no longer gloomy and unsocial; but cons
dering himself as master of a secret stock of happiness, whic
he could enjoy only by concealing it, he affected to be hus
in all schemes of diversion, and endeavoured to make othe
pleased with the state of which he himself was weary. Bu
pleasures never can be so multiplied or continued, as no
to leave much of life unemployed; there were many hour
both of the night and day, which he could spend without su
picion in solitary thought. The load of life was much light
ened; he went eagerly into the assemblies, because he sup
posed the frequency of his presence necessary to the succes
of his purposes; he retired gladly to privacy, because he ha
now a [illegible]

His [illegible] to picture to himself that worl
which [illegible] to place himself in various condi
tions [illegible] in imaginary difficulties, and to b
[illegible] ures; but his benevolence always te
[illegible] in the relief of distress, the detection o
[illegible] ion, and the diffusion of happi

[illegible] of the life of Rasselas. H
[illegible] visionary bustle, that he forgo
[illegible] hourly preparations for th
[illegible] affairs, neglected to consider b
[illegible] ingle with mankind.

[illegible] sitting on a bank, he feigned t
[illegible] rgin robbed of her little portion by

treacherous lover, and crying after him for restitution and redress. So strongly was the image impressed upon his mind, that he started up in the maid's defence, and ran forward to seize the plunderer with all the eagerness of real pursuit. Fear naturally quickens the flight of guilt. Rasselas could not catch the fugitive with his utmost efforts; but resolving to weary, by perseverance, him whom he could not surpass in speed, he pressed on till the foot of the mountain stopped his course.

Here he recollected himself, and smiled at his own useless impetuosity. Then raising his eyes to the mountain, "This," said he, "is the fatal obstacle that hinders at once the enjoyment of pleasure, and the exercise of virtue. How long is it that my hopes and wishes have flown beyond this boundary of my life, which yet I never have attempted to surmount!"

Struck with this reflection he sat down to muse; and remembered, that since he first resolved to escape from his confinement, the sun had passed twice over him in his annual course. He now felt a degree of regret with which he had never been before acquainted. He considered how much might have been done in the time which had passed, and left nothing real behind it. He compared twenty months with the life of man. "In life," said he, "is not to be counted the ignorance of infancy, or imbecility of age. We are long before we are able to think, and we soon cease from the power of acting. The true period of human existence may be reasonably estimated at forty years, of which I have mused away the four and twentieth part. What I have lost was certain, for I have certainly possessed it! but of twenty months to come who can assure me?"

The consciousness of his own folly pierced him deeply, and he was long before he could be reconciled to himself. "The rest of my time," said he, "has been lost by the crime or folly of my ancestors, and the absurd institutions of my country; I remembered it with disgust, yet without remorse; but the months that have passed since new light darted into my soul, since I formed a scheme of reasonable felicity, have been squandered by my own fault. I have lost that which can never be restored; I have seen the sun rise and set for twenty months, an idle gazer on the light of heaven: In this time the birds have left the nest of their mother, and committed themselves to the woods and to the skies: the kid has forsaken the teat and learned by degrees to climb the rocks in quest of independent sustenance. I only have made no advances, but am still helpless and ignorant. The moon, by more than twenty changes, admonished me of the flux of life;

the stream that rolled before my feet upbraided my inactivity. I sat feasting on intellectual luxury, regardless alike of the examples of the earth, and the instructions of the planets. Twenty months are passed, who shall restore them?"

These sorrowful meditations fastened upon his mind; he passed four months in resolving to lose no more time in idle resolves, and was awakened to more vigorous exertion, by hearing a maid, who had broken a porcelain cup, remark, that what cannot be repaired is not to be regretted.

This was obvious; and Rasselas reproached himself that he had not discovered it, having not known, or not considered, how many useful hints are obtained by chance, and how often the mind, hurried by her own ardour to distant views, neglects the truths that lie open before her. He for a few hours regretted his regret, and from that time bent his whole mind upon the means of escaping from the valley of happiness.

CHAP. V.

THE PRINCE MEDITATES HIS ESCAPE.

He now found that it would be very difficult to effect that which it was very easy to suppose effected. When he looked round about him, he saw himself confined by the bars of nature which had never yet been broken, and by the gate, through which none that once had passed it were ever able to return. He was now impatient as an eagle in a grate. He passed week after week in clambering the mountains, to see if there was any aperture which the bushes might conceal, but found all the summits inaccessible by their prominence. The iron gate he despaired to open; for it was not only secured with all the power of art, but was always watched by successive sentinels, and was by its position exposed to the perpetual observation of all the inhabitants.

He then examined the cavern through which the waters of the lake were discharged: and looking down at a time when the sun shone strongly upon its mouth, he discovered it to be f ll of broken rocks, which, though they permitted the stream to flow through many narrow passages, would stop any body of solid bulk. He returned discouraged and dejected; but, having now known the blessing of hope, resolved never to despair.

In these fruitless searches he spent ten months. The time, however, passed cheerfully away: in the morning he rose with new hope, in the evening applauded his own diligence, and in the night slept sound after his fatigue. He met a thousand amusements which beguiled his labour, and diversified his thoughts. He discerned the various instincts of animals, and properties of plants, and found the place replete with wonders, of which he purposed to solace himself with the contemplation, if he should never be able to accomplish his flight; rejoicing that his endeavours, though yet unsuccessful, had supplied him with a source of inexhaustible inquiry.

But his original curiosity was not yet abated; he resolved to obtain some knowledge of the ways of men. His wish still continued, but his hope grew less. He ceased to survey any longer the walls of his prison, and spared to search by new toils for interstices which he knew could not be found, yet determined to keep his design always in view, and lay hold on any expedient that time should offer.

CHAP. VI.

A DISSERTATION ON THE ART OF FLYING.

Among the artists that had been allured into the happy valley, to labour for the accommodation and pleasure of its inhabitants, was a man eminent for his knowledge of the mechanic powers, who had contrived many engines both of use and recreation. By a wheel which the stream turned, he forced the water into a tower, whence it was distributed to all the apartments of the palace. He erected a pavilion in the garden, around which he kept the air always cool by artificial showers. One of the groves, appropriated to the ladies, was ventilated by fans, to which the rivulet that ran through it gave a constant motion; and instruments of soft music were placed at proper distances of which some played by the impulse of the wind, and some by the power of the stream.

This artist was sometimes visited by Rasselas, who was pleased with every kind of knowledge, imagining that the time would come when all his acquisitions should be of use to him in the open world. He came one day to amuse himself in his usual manner, and found the master busy in building a sailing chariot: he saw that the design was practicable upon

a level surface, and with expressions of great esteem solicited its completion. The workman was pleased to find himself so much regarded by the prince, and resolved to gain yet higher honours. "Sir," said he, "you have seen but a small part of what the mechanic sciences can perform. I have been long of opinion, that instead of the tardy conveyance of ships and chariots, man might use the swifter migration of wings; that the fields of air are open to knowledge, and that only ignorance and idleness need crawl upon the ground."

This hint rekindled the prince's desire of passing the mountains; having seen what the mechanist had already performed, he was willing to fancy that he could do more; and resolved to inquire further, before he suffered hope to delude him by disappointment. "I am afraid," said he to the artist, "that your imagination prevails over your skill, and that you now tell me rather what you wish, than what you know. Every animal has his element assigned him; the birds have the air, and man and beasts the earth." "So," replied the mechanist, "fishes have the water, in which yet beasts can swim by nature, and men by art. He that can swim needs not despair to fly: to swim is to fly in a grosser fluid, and to fly is to swim in a subtler. We are only to proportion our power of resistance to the different density of matter through which we are to pass. You will be necessarily upborn by the air, if you can renew any impulse upon it, faster than the air can recede from the pressure."

"But the exercise of swimming," said the prince, "is very laborious; the strongest limbs are soon wearied; I am afraid the act of flying will be yet more violent, and wings will be of no great use, unless we can fly further than we can swim."

"The labour of rising from the ground," said the artist, "will be great, as we see it in the heavier domestic fowls, but as we mount higher, the earth's attraction, and the body's gravity, will be gradually diminished, till we shall arrive at a region where the man will float in the air without any tendency to fall: no care will then be necessary but to move forwards, which the gentlest impulse will effect. You, sir, whose curiosity is so extensive, will easily conceive with what pleasure a philosopher, furnished with wings, and hovering in the sky, would see the earth and all its inhabitants, rolling beneath him, and presenting to him successively, by its diurnal motion, all the countries within the same parallel. How must it amuse the pendant spectator to see the moving scene of land and ocean, cities and deserts! To survey with equal security the marts of trade, and the fields of battle; moun-

tains infested by barbarians, and fruitful regions gladdened by plenty, and lulled by peace? How easily shall we then trace the Nile through all its passage; pass over to distant regions, and examine the face of nature from one extremity of the earth to the other!"

"All this," said the prince, "is much to be desired; but I am afraid that no man will be able to breathe in these regions of speculation and tranquillity. I have been told that respiration is difficult upon lofty mountains, yet from these precipices, though so high as to produce great tenuity of air, it is very easy to fall: therefore I suspect, that from any height, where life can be supported, there may be danger of too quick descent."

"Nothing," replied the artist," "will ever be attempted, if all possible objections must be first overcome. I will try the first flight at my own hazard. I have considered the structure of all volant animals, and find the folding continuity of the bat's wings most easily accommodated to the human form. Upon this model I shall begin my task tomorrow, and in a year expect to tour into the air beyond the malice and pursuit of man. But I will work only on this condition, that the art shall not be divulged, and that you shall not require me to make wings for any but ourselves."

"Why," said Rasselas, "should you envy others so great an advantage? All skill ought to be exerted for universal good; every man has owed much to others, and ought to repay the kindness that he has received."

"If men were all virtuous," returned the artist, "I should with great alacrity teach them all to fly. But what would be the security of the good, if the bad could at pleasure invade them from the sky? Against an army sailing through the clouds, neither walls, nor mountains, nor seas, could afford any security. A flight of northern savages might hover in the wind, and light at once with irresistible violence upon the capital of a fruitful region that was rolling under them. Even this valley, the retreat of princes, the abode of happiness, might be violated by the sudden descent of some of the naked nations that swarm on the coast of the southern sea."

The prince promised secresy, and waited for the performance, not wholly hopeless of success. He visited the work from time to time, observed its progress, and remarked many ingenious contrivances to facilitate motion, and unite levity with strength. The artist was every day more certain that he should leave vultures and eagles behind him, and the contagion of his confidence seized upon the prince.

In a year the wings were finished, and on a morning

appointed, the maker appeared furnished for flight on a little promontory: he waved his pinions awhile to gather air, then leaped from his stand, and in an instant dropt into the lake. His wings which were of no use in the air, sustained him in the water, and the prince drew him to land, half dead with terror and vexation.

CHAP. VII.

THE PRINCE FINDS A MAN OF LEARNING.

The prince was not much afflicted by this disaster, having suffered himself to hope for a happier event only because he had no other means of escape in view. He still persisted in his designs to leave the happy valley by the first opportunity.

His imagination was now at a stand; he had no prospect of entering into the world: and notwithstanding all his endeavours to support himself, discontent by degrees preyed upon him, and he began again to lose his thoughts in sadness, when the rainy season, which in these countries is periodical, made it inconvenient to wander in the woods.

The rain continued longer and with more violence than had been ever known: the clouds broke on the surrounding mountains, and the torrents streamed into the plain on every side, till the cavern was too narrow to discharge the water. The lake overflowed its banks, and all the level of the valley was covered with the inundation. The eminence, on which the palace was built, and some other spots of rising ground, were all that the eye could now discover. The herds and flocks left the pastures, and both the wild beasts and the tame retreated to the mountains.

This inundation confined all the princes to domestic amusements, and the attention of Rasselas was particularly seized by a poem, which Imlac rehearsed, upon the various conditions of humanity. He commanded the poet to attend him in his apartment, and recite his verses a second time; then entering into familiar talk, he thought himself happy in having found a man who knew the world so well, and could so skilfully paint the scenes of life. He asked a thousand questions about things, to which, though common to all other mortals, his confinement from childhood had kept him a stranger. The poet pitied his ignorance, and loved his curiosity, and entertained him from day to day with novelty and

instruction, so that the prince regretted the necessity of sleep, and longed till the morning should renew his pleasure.

As they were sitting together, the prince commanded Imlac to relate his history, and to tell by what accident he was forced, or by what motive induced, to close his life in the happy valley. As he was going to begin his narrative, Rasselas was called to a concert, and obliged to restrain his curiosity till the evening.

CHAP. VIII.

THE HISTORY OF IMLAC.

The close of the day is, in the regions of the torrid zone, the only season of diversion and entertainment, and it was therefore midnight before the music ceased, and the princesses retired. Rasselas then called for his companion, and required him to begin the story of his life.

"Sir," said Imlac, "my history will not be long: the life that is devoted to knowledge passes silently away, and is very little diversified by events. To talk in public, to think in solitude, to read and hear, to inquire and answer inquiries, is the business of a scholar. He wanders about the world without pomp or terror, and is neither known nor valued but by men like himself.

"I was born in the kingdom of Goiama, at no great distance from the fountain of the Nile. My father was a wealthy merchant, who traded between the inland countries of Africk and the ports of the red sea. He was honest, frugal, and diligent, but of mean sentiments, and narrow comprehension: he desired only to be rich, and to conceal his riches, lest he should be spoiled by the governors of the province."

"Surely," said the prince, "my father must be negligent of his charge, if any man in his dominions dares take that which belongs to another. Does he not know that kings are accountable for injustice permitted as well as done? If I were emperor, not the meanest of my subjects should be oppressed with impunity. My blood boils when I am told that a merchant durst not enjoy his honest gains for fear of losing them by the rapacity of power. Name the governor who robbed the people, that I may declare his crimes to the emperor."

"Sir," said Imlac, "your ardour is the natural effect of virtue animated by youth: the time will come when you will acquit your father, and perhaps hear with less impatience of the governor. Oppression is, in the Abyssinian dominions, neither frequent nor tolerated; but no form of government has been yet discovered, by which cruelty can be wholly prevented. Subordination supposes power on one part, and subjection on the ot [illegible] be in the hands of men, it will sometimes [illegible] abus[illegible] vigilance of the supreme magistrate may do muc[illegible]h will still remain undone. He can never know all [illegible]es that are committed, and can seldom punish all [illegible]ws."

"This," said [illegible] not understand, but I had rather hear thee [illegible] ontinue thy narration."

"My father,' [illegible], "originally intended that I should have no [illegible] than such as might qualify me for commerce; and discov[illegible]g in me great strength of memory, and quickness of apprehension, often declared his hope that I should be some time the richest man in Abyssinia."

"Why," said the prince, "did thy father desire the increase of his wealth, when it was already greater than he durst discover or enjoy? I am unwilling to doubt thy veracity, yet inconsistencies cannot both be true."

"Inconsistencies," answered Imlac, "cannot both be right, but imputed to man, they may both be true. Yet diversity is not inconsistency. My father might expect a time of greater security. However some desire is necessary to keep life in motion, and he whose real wants are supplied, must admit those of fancy."

"This," said the prince, "I can in some measure conceive. I repent that I have interrupted thee."

"With this hope," proceeded Imlac, "he sent me to school: but when I had once found the delight of knowledge, and felt the pleasure of intelligence and the pride of invention, I began silently to despise riches, and determined to disappoint the purpose of my father, whose grossness of conception raised my pity. I was twenty years old before his tenderness would expose me to the fatigue of travel, in which time I had been instructed, by successive masters, in the literature of my native country. As every hour taught me something new, I lived in a continual course of gratifications; but as I advanced towards manhood, I lost much of the reverence with wh[illegible] had been used to look on my instructors; because [illegible] lesson was ended, I did not find them wiser or [illegible] common men.

"At length my father resolved to initiate me in commerce, and opening one of his subterranean treasures, counted out ten thousand pieces of gold. This, young man, said he, is the stock with which you must negotiate. I began with less than the fifth part, and you see how diligence and parsimony have increased it. This is your own, to waste or to improve. If you squander it by negligence or caprice, you must wait for my death before you will be rich: if, in four years, you double your stock, we will thenceforward let subordination cease, and live together as friends and partners; for he shall always be equal with me, who is equally skilled in the art of growing rich.

"We laid our money upon camels, concealed in bales of cheap goods, and travelled to the shore of the red sea. When I cast my eye on the expanse of waters, my heart bounded like that of a prisoner escaped. I felt an unextinguishable curiosity kindle in my mind, and resolved to snatch this opportunity of seeing the manners of other nations, and of learning sciences unknown in Abyssinia.

"I remember that my father had obliged me to the improvement of my stock, not by a promise which I ought not to violate, but by a penalty which I was at liberty to incur: and therefore determined to gratify my predominant desire, and by drinking at the fountains of knowledge, to quench the thirst of curiosity.

"As I was supposed to trade without connexion with my father, it was easy for me to become acquainted with the master of a ship, and procure a passage to some other country. I had no motive of choice to regulate my voyage; it was sufficient for me that wherever I wandered, I should see a country which I had not seen before. I therefore entered a ship bound for Surat, having left a letter for my father declaring my intention."

CHAP. IX.

THE HISTORY OF IMLAC CONTINUED.

"When I first entered upon the world of waters, and lost sight of land, I looked round about me with pleasing terror, and thinking my soul enlarged by the boundless prospect, imagined that I could gaze round for ever without satiety: but in a short time, I grew weary of looking on barren uniformity,

where I could only see again what I had already seen. I then descended into the ship, and doubted for a while whether all my future pleasures would not end, like this, in disgust and disappointment. Yet surely, said I, the ocean and the land are very different; the only variety of water is rest and motion, but the earth has mountains and valleys, deserts and cities: it is inhabited by men of different customs and contrary opinions; a[illegible] hope to find variety in life, though I should miss i[illegible]

"With this thoug[illegible] my mind, and amused myself during the voy[illegible] learning from the sailors the art of navig[illegible] never practised, and sometimes by forming sc[illegible] conduct in different situations, in not one of [illegible] been placed.

I was almost weary of [illegible] raval amusements, when we landed safely at Surat. I s[illegible] ed my money, and purchasing some commodities for show, joined myself to a caravan that was passing into the inland country. My companions, for some reason or other, conjecturing that I was rich, and, by my inquiries and admiration, finding that I was ignorant, considered me as a novice whom they had a right to cheat, and who was to learn, at the usual expense, the art of fraud. They exposed me to the theft of servants, and the exaction of officers, and saw me plundered upon false pretences, without any advantage to themselves, but that of rejoicing in the superiority of their own knowledge."

"Stop a moment," said the prince. "Is there such depravity in man, as that he should injure another without benefit to himself? I can easily conceive that all are pleased with superiority: but your ignorance was merely accidental, which being neither your crime nor your folly, could afford them no reason to applaud themselves; and the knowledge which they had, and which you wanted, they might as effectually have shown by warning, as betraying you."

"Pride," said Imlac, "is seldom delicate, it will please itself with very mean advantages; and envy feels not its own happiness, but when it may be compared with the misery of others. They were my enemies, because they grieved to think me rich; and my oppressors, because they delighted to find me weak."

"Proceed," said the prince: "I do not doubt of the facts which you relate, but imagine that you impute them to mistaken motives."

"In this company," said Imlac, "I arrived at Agra, the capital of Indoston, the city in which the Great Mogul commonly resides. I applied myself to the language of the coun-

try, and in a few months was able to converse with the learned men; some of whom I found morose and reserved, and others easy and communicative; some were unwilling to teach another what they had with difficulty learned themselves; and some showed that the end of their studies was to gain the dignity of instructing.

"To the tutor of the young princes I recommended myself so much, that I was presented to the emperor as a man of uncommon knowledge. The emperor asked me many questions concerning my country and my travels; and though I cannot now recollect any thing that he utterd above the power of a common man, he dismissed me astonished at his wisdom, and enamoured of his goodness.

"My credit was now so high, that the merchants, with whom I had travelled, applied to me for recommendations to the ladies of the court. I was surprised at their confidence of solicitation, and gently reproached them with their practices on the road. They heard me with cold indifference, and showed no tokens of shame or sorrow.

"They then urged their request with the offer of a bribe; but what I would not do for kindness, I would not do for money; and refused them, not because they had injured me, but because I would not enable them to injure others; for I knew they would have made use of my credit to cheat those who should buy their wares.

"Having resided at Agra till there was no more to be learned, I travelled into Persia, where I saw many remains of ancient magnificence, and observed many new accommodations of life. The Persians are a nation eminently social, and their assemblies afforded me daily opportunities of remarking characters and manners, and of tracing human nature through all its variations.

"From Persia I passed into Arabia, where I saw a nation at once pastoral and warlike; who live without any settled habitation; whose only wealth is their flocks and herds; and who have yet carried on, through all ages, an hereditary war with all mankind, though they neither covet nor envy their possessions."

CHAP. X.

IMLAC'S HISTORY CONTINUED. A DISSERTATION UPON POETRY.

"WHEREVER I went, I found that poetry was considered as the highest learning, and regarded with a veneration somewhat approaching to that which man would pay to an angelic nature. And yet it fills me with wonder, that in almost all countries, the most ancient poets are considered as the best: whether it be that every other kind of knowledge is an acquisition gradually attained, and poetry is a gift conferred at once; or that the first poetry of every nation surprised them as a novelty, and retained the credit by the assent which it received by accident at first; or whether, as the province of poetry is to describe nature and passions, which are always the same, the first writers took possession of the most striking objects for description, and the most probable occurrences for fiction, and left nothing to those that followed them, but transcription of the same events, and new combinations of the same images. Whatever be the reason, it is commonly observed that the early writers are in possession of nature, and their followers of art: that the first excel in strength and invention, and the latter in elegance and refinement.

"I was desirous to add my name to this illustrious fraternity. I read all the poets of Persia and Arabia, and was able to repeat by memory the volumes that are suspended in the mosque of Mecca. But I soon found that no man was ever great by imitation: My desire of excellence impelled me to transfer my attention to nature and to life. Nature was to be my subject, and men to be my auditors: I could never describe what I had not seen: I could not hope to move those with delight or terror, whose interests and opinions I did not understand.

Being now resolved to be a poet, I saw every thing with a new purpose: my sphere of attention was suddenly magnified: no kind of knowledge was to be overlooked. I ranged mountains and deserts for images and resemblances, and pictured upon my mind every tree of the forest and flower of the valley. I observed with equal care the crags of the rock and the pinnacles of the palace. Sometimes I wandered along the mazes of the rivulet, and sometimes watched the changes of the summer clouds. To a poet nothing can be useless. Whatever is beautiful, and whatever is dreadful, must be

familiar to his imagination: he must be conversant with all that is awfully vast or elegantly little. The plants of the garden, the animals of the wood, the minerals of the earth, and meteors of the sky, must all concur to store his mind with inexhaustible variety: for every idea is useful for the enforcement or decoration of moral or religious truth; and he, who knows most, will have most power of diversifying his scenes, and of gratifying his reader with remote illusions and unexpected instruction.

"All the appearances of nature I was therefore careful to study, and every country which I have surveyed, has contributed something to my poetical powers."

"In so wide a survey," said the prince, "you must surely have left much unobserved. I have lived till now, within the circuit of these mountains, and yet cannot walk abroad without the sight of something which I had never beheld before, or never heeded."

"The business of a poet," said Imlac, "is to examine, not the individual, but the species; to remark general properties and large appearances; he does not number the streaks of the tulip, or describe the different shades in the verdure of the forest. He is to exhibit in his portraits of nature such prominent and striking features as recall the original to every mind; and must neglect the minuter discriminations, which one may have remarked, and another have neglected, for those characteristics which are alike obvious to vigilance and carelessness.

"But the knowledge of nature is only half the task of a poet; he must be acquainted likewise with all the modes of life. His character requires that he estimate the happiness and misery of every condition; observe the power of all the passions in all their combinations, and trace the changes of the human mind as they are modified by various institutions, and accidental influences, of climate or custom, from the sprightliness of infancy to the despondence of decrepitude. He must divest himself of the prejudices of his age or country; he must consider right and wrong in their abstracted and invariable state; he must disregard present laws and opinions, and rise to general and transcendental truths, which will always be the same: he must therefore content himself with the slow progress of his name; contemn the applause of his own time, and commit his claims to the justice of posterity. He must write as the interpreter of nature, and the legislator of mankind, and consider himself as presiding over the thoughts and manners of future generations; as a being superior to time and place.

"His labour is not yet at an end: he must know many languages and many sciences; and, that his style may be worthy of his thoughts, must, by incessant practice, familiarize to himself every delicacy of speech and grace of harmony."

CHAP. XI.

IMLAC'S NARRATIVE CONTINUED. A HINT ON PILGRIMAGE.

IMLAC now felt the enthusisastic fit, and was proceeding to aggrandize his own profession, when the prince cried out, "Enough! thou hast convinced me, that no human being can ever be a poet. Proceed with thy narration."

"To be a poet," said Imlac, "is indeed very difficult." "So difficult," returned the prince, "that I will at present hear no more of his labours. Tell me whither you went when you had seen Persia."

"From Persia," said the poet, "I travelled through Syria, and for three years resided in Palestine, where I conversed with great numbers of the northern and western nations of

visit Palestine, and mingle with this mighty confluence of nations? Till that happy moment shall arrive, let me fill up the time with such representations as thou canst give me. I am not ignorant of the motive that assembles such numbers in that place, and cannot but consider it as the centre of wisdom and piety, to which the best and wisest men of every land must be continually resorting."

"There are some nations," said Imlac, "that send few visitants to Palestine: for many numerous and learned sects in Europe concur to censure pilgrimage as superstitious, or deride it as ridiculous."

"You know," said the prince, "how little my life has made me acquainted with diversity of opinions; it will be too long to hear the arguments on both sides; you, that have considered them, tell me the result.

"Pilgrimage," said Imlac, "like many other acts of piety, may be reasonable or superstitious, according to the principles upon which it is performed. Long journies in search of truth are not commanded. Truth, such as is necessary to the regulation of life, is always found where it is honestly sought. Change of place is no natural cause of the increase of piety, for it inevitably produces dissipation of mind. Yet, since men go every day to view the fields where great actions have been performed, and return with stronger impressions of the event, curiosity of the same kind may naturally dispose us to view that country whence our religion had its beginning; and I believe no man surveys those awful scenes without some confirmation of holy resolutions. That the Supreme Being may be more easily propitiated in one place than in another, is the dream of idle superstition; but that some places may operate upon our own minds in an uncommon manner, is an opinion which hourly experience will justify. He who supposes that his vices may be more successfully combated in Palestine, will, perhaps, find himself mistaken, yet he may go thither without folly: he who thinks they will be more freely pardoned, dishonours at once his reason and religion."

"These," said the prince, "are European distinctions. I will consider them another time. What have you found to be the effect of knowledge? Are those nations happier than we?"

"There is so much infelicity," said the poet, "in the world, that scarce any man has leisure from his own distresses to estimate the comparative happiness of others. Knowledge is certainly one of the means of pleasure, as is confessed by the natural desire which every mind feels of increasing its ideas.

Ignorance is mere privation, by which nothing can be duced: it is a vacuity in which the soul sits motionless torpid for want of attraction; and, without knowing y we always rejoice when we learn, and grieve when we get. I am therefore inclined to conclude, that if notl counteracts the natural consequence of learning, we g more happy as our minds take a wider range."

"In enumerating the particular comforts of life, we find many advantages on the side of the Europeans. T cure wounds and diseases with which we languish and pe We suffer inclemencies of weather which they can obv They have engines for the despatch of many laborious wo which we must perform by manual industry. There is communication between distant places, that one friend hardly be said to be absent from another. Their policy moves all public inconveniences: they have roads cut thr their mountains, and bridges laid upon their rivers. An we descend to the privacies of life, their habitations are commodious, and their possessions are more secure."

"They are surely happy," said the prince, "who hav these conveniences, of which I envy none so much as facility with which separated friends interchange thoughts."

"The Europeans," answered Imlac, "are less unh than we, but they are not happy. Human life is every w a state in which much is to be endured, and little to be joyed."

CHAP. XII.

THE STORY OF IMLAC CONTINUED.

"I AM not yet willing," said the prince, "to suppose happiness is so parsimoniously distributed to mortals; can believe but that, if I had the choice of life, I shoul able to fill every day with pleasure. I would injure no and should provoke no resentment: I would relieve every tress, and should enjoy the benedictions of gratitude would choose my friends among the wise, and my wife an the virtuous; and therefore should be in no danger treachery or unkindness. My children should, by my be learned and pious, and would repay to my age what childhood had received. What would dare to molest him might call on every side to thousands enriched by his bou

or assisted by his power? And why should not life glide quietly away in the soft reciprocation of protection and reverence? All this may be done without the help of European refinements, which appear by their effects to be rather specious than useful. Let us leave them, and pursue our journey."

"From Palestine," said Imlac, "I passed through many regions of Asia; in the more civilized kingdoms as a trader, and among the barbarians of the mountains as a pilgrim. At last I began to long for my native country, that I might repose after my travels and fatigues, in the places where I had spent my earliest years, and gladden my old companions with the recital of my adventures. Often did I figure to myself those with whom I had sported away the gay hours of dawning life, sitting round me in its evening, wondering at my tales, and listening to my counsels.

"When this thought had taken possession of my mind I considered every moment as wasted which did not bring me nearer to Abyssinia. I hastened into Egypt, and notwithstanding my impatience, was detained ten months in the contemplation of its ancient magnificence, and in inquiries after the remains of its ancient learning. I found in Cairo a mixture of all nations: some brought thither by the love of knowledge, some by the hope of gain, and many by the desire of living after their own manner without observation, and of lying hid in the obscurity of multitudes; for in a city populous as Cairo, it is possible to obtain at the same time the gratifications of society, and the secrecy of solitude.

"From Cairo I travelled to Suez, and embarked on the Red Sea, passing along the coast till I arrived at the port from which I had departed twenty years before. Here I joined myself to a caravan, and re-entered my native country.

"I now expected the caresses of my kinsmen and the congratulations of my friends, and was not without hope that my father, whatever value he had set upon riches, would own with gladness and pride a son who was able to add to the felicity and honour of the nation. But I was soon convinced that my thoughts were vain. My father had been dead fourteen years, having divided his wealth among my brothers, who were removed to some other provinces. Of my companions the greater part was in the grave; of the rest, some could with difficulty remember me, and some considered me as one corrupted by foreign manners.

"A man used to vicissitudes is not easily dejected. I forgot after a time, my disappointment, and endeavoured to recommend myself to the nobles of the kingdom; they admit-

ted me to their tables, heard my story, and dismissed me. I opened a school, and was prohibited to teach. I then resolved to sit down in the quiet of domestic life, and addressed a lady that was fond of my conversation, but rejected my suit, because my father was a merchant.

"Wearied at last with solicitation and repulses, I resolved to hide myself for ever from the world, and depend no longer on the opinion [illegible] I waited for the time when the gate [illegible] should open, that I might bid farewell to [illegible] day came; my performance was disti[illegible]nr, and I resigned myself with joy to pe[illegible]"

"Hast thou [illegible]s at last?" said Rasselas. "Tell me withe[illegible]ou content with thy condition? or dost th[illegible] wandering and inquiring? All the inhabit[illegible]elebrate their lot, and at the annual visit[illegible]vite others to partake of their felicity."

"Great prince," said Imlac, "I shall speak the truth; I know not one of all your attendants who does not lament the hour when he entered this retreat. I am less unhappy than the rest, because I have a mind replete with images, which I can vary and combine at pleasure. I can amuse my solitude by the renovation of the knowledge which begins to fade from my memory, and by recollection of the accidents of my past life. Yet all this ends in the sorrowful consideration, that my acquirements are now useless, and that none of my pleasures can be again enjoyed. The rest, whose minds have no impression but of the present moment, are either corroded by malignant passions, or sit stupid in the gloom of perpetual vacancy."

"What passions can infest those," said the prince, "who have no rivals? we are in a place where impotence precludes malice, and where all envy is repressed by community of enjoyments."

"There may be community," said Imlac, "of material possessions, but there can never be community of love or of esteem. It must happen that one will please more than another; he that knows himself despised will always be envious; and still more envious and malevolent, if he is condemned to live in the presence of those who despise him. The invitations, by which they allure others to a state which they feel to be wretched, proceed from the natural malignity of hopeless misery. They are weary of themselves, and of each other, and expect to find relief in new companions. They

envy the liberty which their folly has forfeited, and would gladly see all mankind imprisoned like themselves.

"From this crime, however, I am wholly free. No man can say that he is wretched by my persuasion. I look with pity on the crowds who are annually soliciting admission to captivity, and wish that it were lawful for me to warn them of their danger."

"My dear Imlac," said the prince, "I will open to thee my whole heart. I have long meditated an escape from the happy valley. I have examined the mountains on every side, but find myself insuperably barred: teach me the way to break my prison; thou shalt be the companion of my flight, the guide of my rambles, the partner of my fortune, and my sole director in the *choice of life*."

"Sir," answered the poet, "your escape will be difficult, and, perhaps, you may soon repent your curiosity. The world, which you figure to yourself, smooth and quiet as the lake in the valley, you will find a sea foaming with tempests and boiling with whirlpools: you will be sometimes overwhelmed by the waves of violence, and sometimes dashed against the rocks of treachery. Amidst wrongs and frauds, competitions and anxieties, you will wish a thousand times for these seats of quiet, and willingly quit hope to be free from fear."

"Do not seek to deter me from my purpose," said the prince: "I am impatient to see what thou hast seen; and, since thou art thyself weary of the valley, it is evident, that thy former state was better than this. Whatever be the consequence of my experiment, I am resolved to judge with mine own eyes, of the various conditions of men, and, then to make deliberately my *choice of life*."

"I am afraid," said Imlac, "you are hindered by stronger restraints than my persuasions; yet if your determination is fixed, I do not counsel you to despair. Few things are impossible to diligence and skill."

CHAP. XIII.

RASSELAS DISCOVERS THE MEANS OF ESCAPE.

The prince now dismissed his favourite to rest, but the narrative of wonders and novelties filled his mind with perturbation. He revolved all that he had heard, and prepared innumerable questions for the morning.

Much of his uneasiness was now removed. He had a friend to whom he could impart his thoughts, and whose experience could assist him in his designs. His heart was no longer condemned to swell with silent vexation. He thought that even the *happy valley* might be endured with such a companion, and that if they could range the world together, he should have nothing further to desire.

In a few days the water was discharged, and the ground dried. The pr[illegible]en walked out together to converse withou[illegible] rest. The prince, whose thoughts were [illegible], as he passed by the gate, said, with a co[illegible], "Why art thou so strong and man so wea[illegible]

"Man is not [illegible] his companion; "knowledge is more t[illegible]orce. The master of mechanics laughs [illegible] burst the gate, but cannot do it secretly. [illegible]ient must be tried."

As they were walking on the side of the mountain, they observed that the coneys, which the rain had driven from their burrows, had taken shelter among the bushes, and formed holes behind them, tending upwards in an oblique line. "It has been the opinion of antiquity," said Imlac, "that human reason borrowed many arts from the instinct of animals; let us, therefore, not think ourselves degraded by learning from the coney. We may escape by piercing the mountain in the same direction. We will begin where the summit hangs over the middle part, and labour upward till we shall issue up beyond the prominence."

The eyes of the prince, when he heard of this proposal, sparkled with joy. The execution was easy, and the success certain.

No time was now lost. They hastened early in the morning to choose a place proper for their mine. They clambered with great fatigue among crags and brambles, and returned without having discovered any part that favoured their design. The second and the third day were spent in the same manner and with the same frustration. But, on the fourth, they found a small cavern, concealed by a thicket, where they resolved to make their experiment.

Imlac procured instruments proper to hew stone and remove earth, and they fell to their work on the next day with more eagerness than vigour. They were presently exhausted by their efforts, and sat down to pant upon the grass. The prince, for a moment, appeared to be discouraged. "Sir," said his companion, "practice will enable us to continue our labour for a longer time: mark, however, how far we have

advanced, and you will find that our toil will some time have an end. Great works are performed, not by strength, but perseverance: yonder palace was raised by single stones, yet you see its height and spaciousness. He that shall walk with vigour three hours a day, will pass in seven years a space equal to the circumference of the globe."

They returned to their work day after day, and, in a short time, found a fissure in the rock, which enabled them to pass far with very little obstruction. This Rasselas considered as a good omen. "Do not disturb your mind," said Imlac, "with other hopes or fears than reason may suggest; if you are pleased with prognostics of good, you will be terrified likewise with tokens of evil, and your whole life will be a prey to superstition. Whatever facilitates our work is more than an omen, it is a cause of success. This is one of those pleasing surprises which often happen to active resolution. Many things difficult to design prove easy to performance."

CHAP. XIV.

RASSELAS AND IMLAC RECEIVE AN UNEXPECTED VISIT.

They had now wrought their way to the middle, and solaced their toil with the approach of liberty, when the prince coming down to refresh himself with air, found his sister Nekayah standing before the mouth of the cavity. He started and stood confused, afraid to tell his design, and yet hopeless to conceal it. A few moments determined him to repose on her fidelity; and secure her secrecy by a declaration without reserve.

"Do not imagine," said the princess, "that I came hither as a spy: I had long observed from my window, that you and Imlac directed your walk every day towards the same point, but I did not suppose you had any better reason for the preference than a cooler shade, or more fragrant bank: nor followed you with any other design than to partake of your conversation. Since then not suspicion but fondness has detected you, let me not lose the advantage of my discovery. I am equally weary of confinement with yourself, and not less desirous of knowing what is done or suffered in the world. Permit me to fly with you from this tasteless tranquillity, which will yet grow more loathsome when you have left me. You may deny me to accompany you, but cannot hinder me from following."

The prince, who loved Nekayah above his other sisters, had no inclination to refuse her request, and grieved that he had lost an opportunity of showing his confidence by a voluntary communication. It was therefore agreed that she should leave the valley with them; and that in the mean time, she should watch, lest any other straggler should, by chance or curiosity, follow them to the mountain.

At length th[illegible] n end; they saw light beyond the promi[illegible] to the top of the mountain. beheld the Nil[illegible] rrent, wandering beneath them.

The prince l[illegible] rapture, anticipated all the pleasures of tra[illegible] t was already transported beyond his fath[illegible] mlac, though very joyful at his escape, ha[illegible] of pleasure in the world, which he had b[illegible] which he had been weary.

Rasselas was [illegible] with a wider horizon, that he could not soon be persuaded to return into the valley. He informed his sister that the way was open, and that nothing now remained but to prepare for their departure.

CHAP. XV.

THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS LEAVE THE VALLEY, AND SEE MANY WONDERS.

The prince and princess had jewels sufficient to make them rich whenever they came into a place of commerce, which, by Imlac's direction, they hid in their clothes, and, on the night of the next full moon, all left the valley. The princess was followed only by a single favourite, who did not know whither she was going.

They clambered through the cavity, and began to go down on the other side. The princess and her maid turned their eyes towards every part, and, seeing nothing to bound their prospect, considered themselves as in danger of being lost in a dreary vacuity. They stopped and trembled. "I am almost afraid," said the princess, "to begin a journey of which I cannot perceive an end, and to venture into this immense plain, where I may be approached on every side by me[illegible] I never saw." The prince felt nearly the same e[illegible] though he thought it more manly to conceal them.

Imlac smiled at their terrors, and encouraged them

ceed; but the princess continued irresolute till she had been imperceptibly drawn forward too far to return.

In the morning they found some shepherds in the field, who set milk and fruits before them. The princess wondered that she did not see a palace ready for her reception, and a table spread with delicacies; but being faint and hungry, she drank the milk and eat the fruits, and thought them of a higher flavour than the produce of the valley.

They travelled forward by easy journies, being all unaccustomed to toil or difficulty, and knowing, that though they might be missed, they could not be pursued. In a few days they came into a more populous region, where Imlac was diverted with the admiration which his companions expressed at the diversity of manners, stations, and employments.

Their dress was such as might not bring upon them the suspicion of having any thing to conceal, yet the prince, wherever he came, expected to be obeyed, and the princess was frightened, because those that came into her presence did not prostrate themselves before her. Imlac was forced to observe them with great vigilance, lest they should betray their rank by their unusual behaviour, and detained them several weeks in the first village, to accustom them to the sight of common mortals.

By degrees the royal wanderers were taught to understand that they had for a time laid aside their dignity, and were to expect only such regard as liberality and courtesy could procure. And Imlac having, by many admonitions, prepared them to endure the tumults of a port, and the ruggedness of the commercial race, brought them down to the sea-coast.

The prince and his sister, to whom every thing was new, were gratified equally at all places, and therefore remained for some months at the port without any inclination to pass further. Imlac was content with their stay, because he did not think it safe to expose them, unpractised in the world, to the hazards of a foreign country.

At last he began to fear lest they should be discovered, and proposed to fix a day for their departure. They had no pretensions to judge for themselves, and referred the whole scheme to his direction. He therefore took passage in a ship to Suez; and, when the time came, with great difficulty prevailed on the princess to enter the vessel. They had a quick and prosperous voyage, and from Suez travelled by land to Cairo.

CHAP. XVI

THEY ENTER CAIRO, AND FIND EVERY MAN HAPPY.

As they approached the city, which filled the strang with astonishment, "This," said Imlac to the prince, "is place where travellers and merchants assemble from all corners of the earth. You will here find men of every char ter, and every occupation. Commerce is here honourabl I will act as a merchant, and you shall live as strange who have no other end of travel than curiosity: It will so be observed that we are rich; our reputation will procure access to all whom we shall desire to know; you will see the conditions of humanity, and enable yourself at leisure make your choice of life.

They now entered the town, stunned by the noise, and fended by the crowds. Instruction had not yet so prevail over habit, but that they wondered to see themselves p undistinguished along the street, and met by the lowest of t people without reverence or notice. The princess could at first bear the thought of being levelled with the vulg and, for some days, continued in her chamber, where was served by her favourite Pekuah as in the palace of t valley.

Imlac, who understood traffic, sold part of the jewels t next day, and hired a house, which he adorned with so magnificence, that he was immediately considered as a me chant of great wealth. His politeness attracted many quaintance, and his generosity made him courted by ma dependents His table was crowded by men of every natio who all admired his knowledge, and solicited his favour. companions not being able to mix in the conversation, co make no discovery of their ignorance or surprise, and we gradually initiated in the world as they gained knowled of the language.

The prince had by frequent lectures, been taught the and nature of money; but the ladies could not for a le time comprehend what the merchants did with small pie of gold and silver, or why things of so little use should received as equivalent to the necessaries of life.

They studied the language two years, while Imlac w preparing to set before them the various ranks and conditio of mankind. He grew acquainted with all who had a thing uncommon in their fortune or conduct. He frequent

the voluptuous and the frugal, the idle and the busy, the merchants and the men of learning.

The prince being now able to converse with fluency, and having learned the caution necessary to be observed in his intercourse with strangers, began to accompany Imlac to places of resort, and to enter into all assemblies, that he might make his choice of life.

For some time he thought choice needless, because all appeared to him equally happy. Wherever he went he met gaiety and kindness, and heard the song of joy or the laugh of carelessness. He began to believe that the world overflowed with universal plenty, and that nothing was withheld either from want or merit; that every hand showered liberality, and every heart melted with benevolence; "and who then," says he, "will be suffered to be wretched?"

Imlac permitted the pleasing delusion, and was unwilling to crush the hope of inexperience, till one day having sat a while silent, "I know not," said the prince, "what can be the reason that I am more unhappy than any of our friends. I see them perpetually and unalterably cheerful, but feel my own mind restless and uneasy. I am unsatisfied with those pleasures which I seem most to court; I live in the crowds of jollity, not so much to enjoy company, as to shun myself, and am only loud and merry to conceal my sadness."

"Every man," said Imlac, "may, by examining his own mind, guess what passes in the minds of others: when you feel that your own gaiety is counterfeit, it may justly lead you to suspect that of your companions not to be sincere. Envy is commonly reciprocal. We are long before we are convinced that happiness is never to be found, and each believes it possessed by others, to keep alive the hope of obtaining it for himself. In the assembly, where you passed the last night, there appeared such sprightliness of air, and volatility of fancy, as might have suited beings of an higher order, formed to inhabit serener regions, inaccessible to care or sorrow: yet, believe me, prince, there was not one who did not dread the moment when solitude should deliver him to the tyranny of reflection."

"This," said the prince, "may be true of others, since it is true of me; yet, whatever be the general infelicity of man, one condition is more happy than another, and wisdom surely directs us to take the least evil in the choice of life."

"The causes of good and evil," answered Imlac, "are so various and uncertain, so often entangled with each other, so diversified by various relations, and so much subject to accidents which cannot be foreseen, that he who would fix his

condition upon incontestible reasons of preference, must live and die inquiring and deliberating."

"But surely," said Rasselas, "the wise men to whom we listen with reverence and wonder, chose that mode of life for themselves which they thought most likely to make them happy."

"Very few," said the poet, "live by choice. Every man is placed in his present condition by causes which acted without his foresight, and with which he did not always willingly cooperate: and therefore you will rarely meet one who does not think the lot of his neighbour better than his own."

"I am pleased to think," said the prince, "that my birth has given me at least one advantage over others, by enabling me to determine for myself. I have here the world before me; I will review it at leisure: surely happiness is somewhere to be found."

CHAP. XVII.

THE PRINCE ASSOCIATES WITH YOUNG MEN OF SPIRIT AND GAIETY.

Rasselas rose next day, and resolved to begin his experiments upon life. "Youth," cried he, "is the time of gladness: I will join myself to the young men, whose only business is to gratify their desires, and whose time is all spent in a succession of enjoyments."

To such societies he was readily admitted, but a few days brought him back weary and disgusted. Their mirth was without images; their laughter without motive; their pleasures were gross and sensual, in which the mind had no part; their conduct was at once wild and mean; they laughed at order and at law, but the frown of power dejected, and the eye of wisdom abashed them.

The prince soon concluded, that he should never be happy in a course of life of which he was ashamed. He thought it unsuitable to a reasonable being to act without a plan, and to be sad or cheerful only by chance. "Happiness," said he, "must be something solid and permanent, without fear and without uncertainty."

But his young companions had gained so much of his regard by their frankness, and courtesy, that he could not leave them without warning and remonstrance. "My friends,"

said he, "I have seriously considered our manners and our prospects, and find that we have mistaken our own interest. The first years of man must make provision for the last.—He that never thinks never can be wise. Perpetual levity must end in ignorance; and intemperance, though it may fire the spirits for an hour, will make life short or miserable.—Let us consider that youth is of no long duration, and that in maturer age, when the enchantments of fancy shall cease, and phantoms of delight dance no more about us, we shall have no comforts but the esteem of wise men, and the means of doing good. Let us, therefore, stop, while to stop is in our power: let us live as men who are some time to grow old, and to whom it will be the most dreadful of all evils to count their past years by follies, and to be reminded of their former luxuriance of health only by the maladies which riot has produced."

They stared awhile in silence upon one another, and at last drove him away by a general chorus of continued laughter.

The consciousness that his sentiments were just, and his intentions kind, was scarcely sufficient to support him against the horror of derision. But he recovered his tranquillity, and pursued his search.

CHAP. XVIII.

THE PRINCE FINDS A WISE AND HAPPY MAN.

As he was one day walking in the street, he saw a spacious building which all were, by the open doors, invited to enter: he followed the stream of people, and found it a hall or school of declamation, in which professors read lectures to their auditory. He fixed his eye upon a sage raised above the rest, who discoursed with great energy on the government of the passions. His look was venerable, his action graceful, his pronunciation clear, and his diction elegant. He showed, with great strength of sentiment, and variety of illustration, that human nature is degraded and debased, when the lower faculties predominate over the higher; that when fancy, the parent of passion, usurps the dominion of the mind, nothing ensues but the natural effect of unlawful government, perturbation and confusion; that she betrays the fortresses of the intellect to rebels, and excites her children to sedition against reason, their lawful sovereign. He compared reason to the sun, of which the light is constant, uniform, and lasting;

and fancy to a meteor, of bright but transitory lustre; irregular in its motion, and delusive in its direction.

He then communicated the various precepts given from time to time for the conquest of passion, and displayed the happiness of those who had obtained the important victory, after which man is no longer the slave of fear, nor the sport of hope; is no more emaciated by envy, inflamed by anger, emasculated by tenderness, or depressed by grief; but passes on calmly through the tumults or privacies of life, as the sun pursues alike his course through the calm or the stormy air.

He enumerated many examples of heroes immovable by pain or pleasure, who looked with indifference on those modes or accidents to which the vulgar give the names of good and evil. He exhorted his hearers to lay aside their prejudices, and arm themselves against the shafts of malice or misfortune, by invulnerable patience, concluding, that this state only was happiness, and that this happiness was in every one's power.

Rasselas listened to him with the veneration due to the instructions of a superior being, and, waiting for him at the door, humbly implored the liberty of visiting so great a master of true wisdom. The lecturer hesitated a moment, when Rasselas put a purse of gold into his hand, which he received with a mixture of joy and wonder.

"I have found," said the prince, at his return to Imlac, "a man who can teach all that is necessary to be known, who from the unshaken throne of rational fortitude, looks down on the scenes of life changing beneath him. He speaks, and attention watches his lips. He reasons, and conviction closes his periods. This man shall be my future guide: I will learn his doctrines, and imitate his life."

"Be not too hasty," said Imlac, "to trust, or to admire the teachers of morality: they discourse like angels but they live like men."

Rasselas, who could not conceive how any man could reason so forcibly without feeling the cogency of his own arguments, paid his visit in a few days, and was denied admission. He had now learned the power of money, and made his way by a piece of gold to the inner apartment, where he found the philosopher in a room half darkened, with his eyes misty, and his face pale. "Sir," said he, "you are come at a time when all human friendship is useless; what I suffer cannot be remedied, what I have lost cannot be supplied. My daughter, my only daughter, from whose tenderness I expected all the comforts of my age, died last night of a fever. My views, my purposes, my hopes are at an end: I am now a lonely being disunited from society."

"Sir," said the prince, "mortality is an event by which a wise man can never be surprised: we know that death is always near, and it should therefore always be expected." "Young man," answered the philosopher, "you speak like one that has never felt the pangs of separation." "Have you then forgot the precepts," said Rasselas, "which you so powerfully enforced? Has wisdom no strength to arm the heart against calamity? Consider, that external things are naturally variable, but truth and reason are always the same." "What comfort," said the mourner, "can truth and reason afford me? of what effect are they now, but to tell me, that my daughter will not be restored?"

The prince, whose humanity would not suffer him to insult misery with reproof, went away convinced of the emptiness of rhetorical sound, and the inefficacy of polished periods and studied sentences.

CHAP. XIX.

A GLIMPSE OF PASTORAL LIFE.

He was still eager upon the same inquiry: and having heard of a hermit, that lived near the lowest cataract of the Nile, and filled the whole country with the fame of his sanctity, resolved, to visit his retreat, and inquire whether that felicity which public life could not afford, was to be found in solitude: and whether a man whose age and virtue made him venerable, could teach any peculiar art of shunning evils, or enduring them?

Imlac and the princess agreed to accompany him, and, after the necessary preparations, they began their journey. Their way lay through the fields, where shepherds tended their flocks, and the lambs were playing upon the pasture. "This," said the poet, "is the life which has been often celebrated for its innocence and quiet; let us pass the heat of the day among the shepherds' tents, and know whether all our searches are not to terminate in pastoral simplicity."

The proposal pleased them, and they induced the shepherds, by small presents and familiar questions, to tell their opinion of their own state: they were so rude and ignorant, so little able to compare the good with the evil of the occupation, and so indistinct in their narratives and descriptions, that very little could be learned from them. But it was evident that their hearts were cankered with discontent; that they con-

sidered themselves as condemned to labour for the [illegible] life rich, and looked up with stupid malevolence toward [illegible] that were placed above them.

The princess pronounced with vehemence, that she [illegible] never suffer these envious savages to be her companions, [illegible] that she should not soon be desirous of seeing any more [illegible] cimens of rustic happiness; but could not believe that [illegible] accounts of primeval pleasures were fabulous; and [illegible] in doubt, whether life had any thing that could be justly [illegible] ferred to the placid gratifications of fields and woods. [illegible] hoped that the time would come, when, with a few virtuous and elegant companions, she should gather flowers [illegible] by her own hand, fondle the lambs of her own ewe, and [illegible] without care, among brooks and breezes, to one of her [illegible] reading in the shade.

CHAP. XX.

THE DANGER OF PROSPERITY.

On the next day they continued their journey, till the h[illegible] compelled them to look round for shelter. At a small d[illegible] tance they saw a thick wood, which they no sooner enter[illegible] than they perceived that they were approaching the habi[illegible] tions of men. The shrubs were diligently cut away to op[illegible] walks where the shades were darkest; the boughs of oppos[illegible] trees were artificially interwoven; seats of flowery turf we[illegible] raised in vacant spaces, and a rivulet, that wantoned alo[illegible] the side of a winding path, had its banks sometimes open[illegible] into small basins, and its streams sometimes obstructed [illegible] little mounds of stone, heaped together to increase its mu[illegible] murs.

They passed slowly through the wood, delighted with su[illegible] unexpected accommodations, and entertained each other wi[illegible] conjecturing what, or who, he could be, that, in those ra[illegible] and unfrequented regions, had leisure and art for such harm[illegible] less luxury.

As they advanced they heard the sound of music, and sa[illegible] youths and virgins dancing in the grove; and, going still fu[illegible] ther, beheld a stately palace built upon a hill surrounded wi[illegible] woods. The laws of eastern hospitality allowed them to e[illegible] ter, and the master welcomed them like a man liberal as [illegible] wealthy.

He was skilful enough in appearances soon to discern that they were no common guests, and spread his table with magnificence. The eloquence of Imlac caught his attention, and the lofty courtesy of the princess excited his respect. When they offered to depart he entreated their stay, and was the next day still more unwilling to dismiss them than before. They were easily persuaded to stop, and civility grew up in time to freedom and confidence.

The prince now saw all the domestics cheerful, and all the face of nature smiling round the place, and could not forbear to hope that he should find here what he was seeking; but when he was congratulating the master upon his possessions, he answered with a sigh, "My condition has indeed the appearance of happiness, but appearances are delusive. My prosperity puts my life in danger; the Bassa of Egypt is my enemy, incensed only by my wealth and popularity. I have been hitherto protected against him by the princes of the country; but, as the favour of the great is uncertain, I know not how soon my defenders may be persuaded to share the plunder with the Bassa. I have sent my treasures into a distant country, and, upon the first alarm, am prepared to follow them. Then will my enemies riot in my mansion, and enjoy the gardens which I have planted."

They all joined in lamenting his danger, and deprecating his exile: and the princess was so much disturbed with the tumult of grief and indignation, that she retired to her apartment. They continued with their kind inviter a few days longer, and then went forward to find the hermit.

CHAP. XXI.

THE HAPPINESS OF SOLITUDE. THE HERMIT'S HISTORY.

They came on the third day, by the direction of the peasants, to the hermit's cell: it was a cavern in the side of a mountain, overshadowed with palm trees; at such a distance from the cataract, that nothing more was heard than a gentle uniform murmur, such as composed the mind to pensive meditation, especially when it was assisted by the wind whistling among the branches. The first rude essay of nature had been so much improved by human labour, that the cave contained several apartments appropriated to different uses,

and often afforded lodging to travellers, whom darkness or tempests happened to overtake.

The hermit sat on a bench at the door, to enjoy the coolness of the evening. On one side lay a book with pens and papers, on the other mechanical instruments of various kinds. As they approached him unregarded, the princess observed that he had not the countenance of a man that had found or could teach the way to happiness.

They saluted [illegible] spect, which he repaid like a man not una[illegible] ms of courts. "My children," said he, [illegible] our way, you shall be willingly supplied [illegible] ncies for the night as this cavern will aft[illegible] t nature requires, and you will not expect [illegible] mit's cell."

They thank[illegible] ng, were pleased with the neatness and [illegible] ace. The hermit set flesh and wine befo[illegible] fed only upon fruits and water. His d[illegible] l without levity, and pious without enthusiasm. He soon gained the esteem of his guests, and the princess repented of her hasty censure.

At last Imlac began thus: "I do not now wonder that your reputation is so far extended; we have heard at Cairo of your wisdom, and came hither to implore your direction for this young man and maiden in the *choice of life.*"

"To him that lives well," answered the hermit, "every form of life is good; nor can I give any other rule for choice, than to remove from all apparent evil."

"He will remove most certainly from evil," said the prince, "who shall devote himself to that solitude which you have recommended by your example."

"I have indeed lived fifteen years in solitude," said the hermit, "but have no desire that my example should gain any imitators. In my youth I professed arms, and was raised by degrees to the highest military rank. I have traversed wide countries at the head of my troops, and seen many battles and sieges. At last, being disgusted by the preferment of a young officer, and feeling that my vigour was beginning to decay, I was resolved to close my life in peace, having found the world full of snares, discord, and misery. I had once escaped from the pursuit of the enemy by the shelter of this cavern, and therefore chose it for my final residence. I employed artificers to form it into chambers, and stored it with all I was likely to want.

"For some time after my retreat, I rejoiced like a pest-beaten sailor at his entrance into the harbour, bei lighted with the sudden change of the noise and hur

to stillness and repose. When the pleasure of novelty went away, I employed my hours in examining the plants which grow in the valley, and the minerals which I collected from the rocks. But that inquiry is now grown tasteless and irksome. I have been for some time unsettled and distracted: my mind is disturbed with a thousand perplexities of doubt, and vanities of imagination, which hourly prevail upon me because I have no opportunities of relaxation or diversion. I am sometimes ashamed to think that I could not secure myself from vice but by retiring from the exercise of virtue, and begin to suspect that I was rather impelled by resentment, than led by devotion, into solitude. My fancy riots in scenes of folly, and I lament that I have lost so much, and have gained so little. In solitude, if I escape the example of bad men, I want likewise the counsel and conversation of the good. I have been long comparing the evils with the advantages of society, and resolve to return into the world to-morrow. The life of a solitary man will be certainly miserable, but not certainly devout."

They heard his resolution with surprise, but after a short pause, offered to conduct him to Cairo. He dug up a considerable treasure which he had hid among the rocks, and accompanied them to the city, on which, as he approached it, he gazed with rapture.

CHAP. XXII.

THE HAPPINESS OF A LIFE LED ACCORDING TO NATURE.

Rasselas went often to an assembly of learned men, who met at stated times to unbend their minds, and compare their opinions. Their manners were somewhat coarse, but their conversation was instructive, and their disputations acute, though sometimes too violent, and often continued till neither controvertist remembered upon what question they began. Some faults were almost general among them: every one was desirous to dictate to the rest, and every one was pleased to hear the genius or knowledge of another depreciated.

In this assembly Rasselas was relating his interview with the hermit, and the wonder with which he heard him censure a course of life which he had so deliberately chosen and so laudably followed. The sentiments of the hearers were various. Some were of opinion, that the folly of his choice had been justly punished by condemnation to perpetual perseve-

rance. One of the youngest among them, with great vehe mence, pronounced him an hypocrite. Some talked of th right of society to the labour of individuals, and considere retirement as a desertion of duty. Others readily allowed that there was a time when the claims of the public were satisfied, and when a man might properly sequester himself, to review his life, and purify his heart.

One, who cted with the narrative than the rest, tho the hermit would, in a few years go ba d, perhaps, if shame did not restrain, or return once more from his retreat into e hope of happiness," said he, "is so at the longest experience is not able to ent state whatever it be, we feel, and ar misery; yet, when the same state is agai nation paints it as desirable. But the time hen desire will be no longer our torment, and no man shall be wretched but by his own fault."

"This," said a philosopher, who had heard him with tokens of great impatience, "is the present condition of a wise man. The time is already come, when none are wretched but by their own fault. Nothing is more idle than to inquire after happiness, which nature has kindly placed within our reach. The way to be happy is to live according to nature, in obedience to that universal and unalterable law with which every heart is originally impressed: which is not written on it by precept, but engraven by destiny, not instilled by education, but infused at our nativity. He that lives according to nature will suffer nothing from the delusions of hope, or importunities of desire: he will receive and reject with equability of temper; and act or suffer as the reason of things shall alternately prescribe. Other men may amuse themselves with suitable definitions, or intricate ratiocinations. Let them learn to be wise by easier means: let them observe the hind of the forest, and the linnet of the grove: let them consider the life of animals, whose motions are regulated by instinct; they obey their guide and are happy. Let us, therefore, at length, cease to dispute and learn to live; throw away the incumbrance of precepts, which they who utter them with so much pride and pomp do not understand, and carry w this simple and intelligible maxim, That deviation fro ture is deviation from happiness."

When he had spoken, he looked round him with a pl and enjoyed the consciousness of his own benefice said the prince, with great modesty, "as I, like

of mankind, am desirous of felicity, my closest attention has been fixed upon your discourse: I doubt not the truth of a position which a man so learned has so confidently advanced. Let me only know what it is to live according to nature."

"When I find young men so humble and so docile," said the philosopher, "I can deny them no information which my studies have enabled me to afford. To live according to nature, is to act always with due regard to the fitness arising from the relations and qualities of causes and effects; to concur with the great and unchangeable scheme of universal felicity; to co-operate with the general disposition and tendency of the present system of things."

The prince soon found that this was one of the sages whom he should understand less as he heard him longer. He therefore bowed and was silent, and the philosopher, supposing him satisfied, and the rest vanquished, rose up and departed with the air of a man that had co-operated with the present system.

CHAP. XXIII.

THE PRINCE AND HIS SISTER DIVIDE BETWEEN THEM THE WORK OF OBSERVATION.

Rasselas returned home full of reflections, doubtful how to direct his future steps. Of the way to happiness he found the learned and simple equally ignorant; but, as he was yet young, he flattered himself that he had time remaining for more experiments, and further inquiries. He communicated to Imlac his observations and his doubts, but was answered by him with new doubts, and remarks that gave him no comfort. He therefore discoursed more frequently and freely with his sister, who had yet the same hope with himself, and always assisted him to give some reason why, though he had been hitherto frustrated, he might succeed at last.

"We have hitherto," said she, "known but little of the world: we have never yet been either great or mean. In our country, though we had royalty, we had no power, and in this we have not yet seen the private recesses of domestic peace. Imlac favours not our search, lest we should in time find him mistaken. We will divide the task between us: you shall try what is to be found in the splendour of courts, and I will range the shades of humbler life. Perhaps command

and authority may be the supreme blessings, as they afford most opportunities of doing good: or perhaps, what this world can give may be found in the modest habitations of middle fortune; too low for great designs, and too high for penury and distress."

IV.

THE PRINCE I[illegible] [illegible]INESS OF HIGH STATIONS.

RASSELAS [illegible], and appeared next day with a splend[illegible] [illegible]rt of the Bassa. He was soon distingu[illegible] [illegible]cence, and admitted, as a prince whose c[illegible] [illegible]t him from distant countries, to an inti[illegible] [illegible]t officers, and frequent conversation with the Bassa himself.

He was at first inclined to believe, that the man must be pleased with his own condition, whom all approached with reverence, and heard with obedience, and who had the power to extend his edicts to a whole kingdom. "There can be no pleasure," said he, "equal to that of feeling at once the joy of thousands all made happy by wise administration. Yet, since by the law of subordination, this sublime delight can be in one nation but the lot of one, it is surely reasonable to think, that there is some satisfaction more popular and accessible, and that millions can hardly be subjected to the will of a single man, only to fill his particular breast with incommunicable content."

These thoughts were often in his mind, and he found no solution of the difficulty. But as presents and civilities gained him more familiarity, he found that almost every man who stood high in employment hated all the rest, and was hated by them, and that their lives were a continual succession of plots and detections, stratagems and escapes, faction and treachery. Many of those who surrounded the Bassa, were sent only to watch and report his conduct; every tongue was muttering censure, and every eye was searching for a fault.

At last the letters of revocation arrived, the Bassa was carried in chains to Constantinople, and his name was m[illegible]tioned no more.

"What are we now to think of the prerogatives of pov[illegible] said Rasselas to his sister; "is it without any effic[illegible] good? or, is the subordinate degree only dangerous a[illegible] supreme safe and glorious? Is the Sultan the only h[illegible]

in his dominions? or, is the Sultan himself subject to the torments of suspicion, and the dread of enemies?"

In a short time the second Bassa was deposed. The Sultan, that had advanced him, was murdered by the Janisaries. and his successor had other views and different favourites.

CHAP. XXV.

THE PRINCESS PURSUES HER INQUIRY WITH MORE DILIGENCE THAN SUCCESS.

The princess, in the mean time, insinuated herself into many families; for there are few doors, through which liberality, joined with good humour, cannot find its way. The daughters of many houses were airy and cheerful, but Nekayah had been too long accustomed to the conversation of Imlac and her brother to be much pleased with childish levity and prattle, which had no meaning. She found their thoughts narrow, their wishes low, and their merriment often artificial. Their pleasures, poor as they were, could not be preserved pure, but were embittered by petty competitions and worthless emulation. They were always jealous of the beauty of each other; of a quality to which solicitude can add nothing, and from which detraction can take nothing away. Many were in love with triflers like themselves, and many fancied that they were in love when in truth they were only idle. Their affection was not fixed on sense or virtue, and therefore seldom ended but in vexation. Their grief, however, like their joy, was transient; every thing floated in their mind unconnected with the past or future, so that one desire easily gave way to another, as a second stone cast into the water effaces and confounds the circles of the first.

With these girls she played as with inoffensive animals, and found them proud of her countenance, and weary of her company.

But her purpose was to examine more deeply, and her affability easily persuaded the hearts that were swelling with sorrow, to discharge their secrets in her ear: and those whom hope flattered, or prosperity delighted, often courted her to partake their pleasures.

The princess and her brother commonly met in the evening in a private summer-house on the bank of the Nile, and related to each other the occurrences of the day. As they were sitting together, the princess cast her eyes upon the river that

flowed before her. "Answer," said she, "great father of waters, thou that rollest thy floods through eighty nations, to the invocations of the daughter of thy native king. Tell me if thou waterest, through all thy course, a single habitation from which thou dost not hear the murmurs of complaint."

"You are ther[illegible]," said Rasselas, "not more successful in private houses th[illegible] courts." "I have, since the last partition [illegible]," said the princess, "enabled myself to [illegible] into many families, where there was the f[illegible] perity and peace, and know not one house th[illegible] by some fury that destroys their quiet.

"I did not [illegible] poor, because I concluded that there it c[illegible] But I saw many poor whom I had supposed [illegible]e. Poverty has, in large cities, very different appearances: it is often concealed in splendour, and often in extravagance. It is the care of a very great part of mankind to conceal their indigence from the rest: they support themselves by temporary expedients, and every day is lost in contriving for the morrow.

"This, however, was an evil, which, though frequent, I saw with less pain, because I could relieve it. Yet some have refused my bounties; more offended with my quickness to detect their wants, than pleased with my readiness to succour them: and others, whose exigencies compelled them to admit my kindness, have never been able to forgive their benefactress. Many, however, have been sincerely grateful, without the ostentation of gratitude, or the hope of other favours."

CHAP. XXVI.

THE PRINCESS CONTINUES HER REMARKS UPON PRIVATE LIFE.

NEKAYAH perceiving her brother's attention fixed, proceeded in her narrative.

"In families, where there is or is not poverty, ther[illegible] commonly discord; if a kingdom be, as Imlac tells us, [illegible] family, a family likewise is a little kingdom, torn wi[illegible] tions, and exposed to revolutions. An unpractised [illegible] expects the love of parents and children to be [illegible] equal; but this kindness seldom continues bey[illegible]

of infancy: in a short time the children become rivals to their parents. Benefits are allayed by reproaches, and gratitude debased by envy.

"Parents and children seldom act in concert: each child endeavours to appropriate the esteem or fondness of the parents, and the parents, with yet less temptation, betray each other to their children; thus some place their confidence in the father, and some in the mother, and by degrees the house is filled with artifices and feuds.

"The opinions of children and parents, of the young and the old, are naturally opposite, by the contrary effects of hope and despondence, of expectation and experience, without crime or folly on either side. The colours of life in youth and age appear different, as the face of nature in spring and winter. And how can children credit the assertions of parents, which their own eyes show them to be false?

"Few parents act in such a manner as much to enforce their maxims by the credit of their lives. The old man trusts wholly to slow contrivance and gradual progression: the youth expects to force his way by genious, vigour, and precipitance. The old man pays regard to riches, and the youth reverences virtue. The old man defies prudence: the youth commits himself to magnanimity and chance. The young man who intends no ill, believes that none is intended, and therefore, acts with openness and candour: but his father, having suffered the injuries of fraud, is impelled to suspect, and too often allured to practise it. Age looks with anger on the temerity of youth, and youth with contempt on the scrupulosity of age. Thus parents and children, for the greatest part, live on to love less and less: and, if those whom nature has thus closely united are the torments of each other, where shall we look for tenderness and consolation?"

"Surely," said the prince, "you must have been unfortunate in your choice of acquaintance: I am unwilling to believe, that the most tender of all relations is thus impeded in its effects by natural necessity."

"Domestic discord," answered she, "is not inevitably and fatally necessary; but yet it is not easily avoided. We seldom see that a whole family is virtuous: the good and evil cannot well agree; and the evil can yet less agree with one another: even the virtuous fall sometimes to variance, when their virtues are of different kinds, and tending to extremes. In general, those parents have most reverence who most deserve it: for he that lives well cannot be despised.

"Many other evils infest private life. Some are the slaves of servants whom they have trusted with their affairs. Some

are kept in continual anxiety to the caprice of rich relations, whom they cannot please, and dare not offend. Some husbands are imperious, and some wives perverse: and, as it is always more easy to do evil than good, though the wisdom or virtue of one can very rarely make many happy, the folly or vice of one may often make many miserable."

"If such be the general effect of marriage," said the prince, "I shall for the future think it dangerous to connect my interest with that or another, lest I should be unhappy by my partner's fault."

"I have met," said the princess, "with many who live single for that reason: but I never found that their prudence ought to raise envy. They dream away their time without friendship, without fondness, and are driven to rid themselves of the day, for which they have no use, by childish amusements, or vicious delights. They act as beings under the constant sense of some known inferiority, that fills their minds with rancour, and their tongues with censure. They are peevish at home, and malevolent abroad; and, as the outlaws of human nature, make it their business and their pleasure to disturb that society which debars them from its privileges. To live without feeling or exciting sympathy, to be fortunate without adding to the felicity of others, or afflicted without tasting the balm of pity, is a state more gloomy than solitude: it is not retreat, but exclusion from mankind. Marriage has many pains, but celibacy has no pleasures."

"What then is to be done?" said Rasselas; "the more we inquire, the less we can resolve. Surely he is most likely to please himself, that has no other inclination to regard.

CHAP. XXVII.

DISQUISITION UPON GREATNESS.

The conversation had a short pause. The prince, having considered his sister's observations, told her, that she had surveyed life with prejudice, and supposed misery where she did not find it. "Your narrative," says he, "throws yet a darker gloom upon the prospects of futurity: the predictions of Imlac were but faint sketches of the evils painted by Nekayah. I have been lately convinced that quiet is not the daughter of grandeur, or of power: that her presence is not

to be bought by wealth, nor enforced by conquest. It is evident, that as any man acts in a wider compass, he must be more exposed to opposition from enmity, or miscarriage from chance; whoever has many to please or to govern, must use the ministry of many agents, some of whom will be wicked, and some ignorant; by some he will be misled, and by others betrayed. If he gratifies one he will offend another; those that are not favoured will think themselves injured; and, since favours can be conferred but upon few, the greater number will be always discontented."

"The discontent," said the princess," which is thus unreasonable, I hope that I shall always have spirit to despise, and you power to repress."

"Discontent," answered Rasselas, "will not always be without reason under the most just and vigilant administration of public affairs. None, however attentive, can always discover that merit which indigence or faction may happen to obscure; and none, however powerful, can always reward it. Yet, he that sees inferior desert advanced above him, will naturally impute that preference to partiality or caprice; and, indeed, it can scarcely be hoped that any man, however magnanimous by nature, or exalted by condition, will be able to persist for ever in the fixed and inexorable justice of distribution; he will sometimes indulge his own affections, and sometimes those of his favourites; he will permit some to please him who can never serve him; he will discover in those whom he loves, qualities which in reality they do not possess; and to those, from whom he receives pleasure, he will in his turn endeavour to give it. Thus will recommendations sometimes prevail which were purchased by money, or by the more destructive bribery of flattery and servility.

"He that has much to do will do something wrong, and of that wrong must suffer the consequences; and, if it were possible that he should always act rightly, yet when such numbers are to judge of his conduct, the bad will censure and obstruct him by malevolence, and the good sometimes by mistake.

"The highest stations cannot therefore hope to be the abodes of happiness, which I would willingly believe to have fled from thrones and palaces to seats of humble privacy and placid obscurity. For what can hinder the satisfaction, or intercept the expectations, of him whose abilities are adequate to his employments, who sees with his own eyes the whole circuit of his influence, who chooses by his own knowledge all whom he trusts, and whom none are tempted to deceive by hope or fear? Surely he has nothing to do but to love and to be loved, to be virtuous and to be happy."

"Whether perfect happiness would be procured by perfect goodness," said Nekayah, "this world will never afford an opportunity of deciding. But this, at least, may be maintained, that we do not always find visible happiness in proportion to visible virtue. All natural, and almost all political evils, are incident alike to the bad and good: they are confounded in the misery of a famine, and not much distinguished in the fury of a faction; they sink together in a tempest, and are driven together from [illegible]ry by invaders. All that virtue can afford is quie[illegible] onscience, a steady prospect of a happier state; this m[illegible] enable us to endure calamity with patience; but reme[illegible] that patience must suppose pain.

CHAP. XXVIII.

RASSELAS AND NEKAYAH CONTINUE THEIR CONVERSATION.

"Dear Princess," said Rasselas, "you fall into the common errors of exaggeratory declamation, by producing, in a familiar disquisition, examples of national calamities, and scenes of extensive misery, which are found in books rather than in the world, and which, as they are horrid, are ordained to be rare. Let us not imagine evils which we do not feel, nor injure life by misrepresentations. I cannot bear that querulous eloquence which threatens every city with a siege like that of Jerusalem, that makes famine attend on every flight of locusts, and suspends pestilence on the wing of every blast that issues from the south.

"On necessary and inevitable evils, which overwhelm kingdoms at once, all disputation is vain: when they happen they must be endured. But it is evident, that these bursts of universal distress are more dreaded than felt; thousands and ten thousands flourish in youth, and wither in age, without the knowledge of any other than domestic evils, and share the same pleasures and vexations, whether their kings are mild or cruel, whether the armies of their country pursue their enemies, or retreat before them. While courts are disturbed with intestine competitions, and ambassadors are negotiating in foreign countries, the smith still plies his anvil, and the husbandman drives his plough forward; the necessaries of life are required and obtained; and the successive business of the seasons continues to make its wonted revolutions.

"Let us cease to consider what, perhaps, may never happen, and what, when it shall happen, will laugh at human speculation. We will not endeavour to modify the nations of the elements, or to fix the destiny of kingdoms. It is our business to consider what beings like us may perform: each labouring for his own happiness, by promoting within his circle, however narrow, the happiness of others.

"Marriage is evidently the dictate of nature; men and women are made to be the companions of each other, and therefore I cannot be persuaded but that marriage is one of the means of happiness."

"I know not," said the princess, "whether marriage be more than one of the innumerable modes of human misery. When I see and reckon the various forms of connubial infelicity, the unexpected causes of lasting discord, the diversities of temper, the oppositions of opinion, the rude collisions of contrary desire where both are urged by violent impulses, the obstinate contests of disagreeable virtues, where both are supported by consciousness of good intention; I am sometimes disposed to think with the severer casuists of most nations, that marriage is rather permitted than approved, and that none, but by the instigation of a passion too much indulged, entangle themselves with indissoluble compacts."

"You seem to forget," replied Rasselas, "that you have, even now, represented celibacy as less happy than marriage. Both conditions may be bad, but they cannot both be worst. Thus it happens when wrong opinions are entertained, that they mutually destroy each other, and leave the mind open to truth."

"I did not expect," answersd the princess, "to hear that imputed to falsehood which is the consequence only of frailty. To the mind, as to the eye, it is difficult to compare with exactness objects vast in their extent, and various in their parts. Where we see or conceive the whole at once, we readily note the discriminations, and decide the preference: but of two systems, of which neither can be surveyed by any human being in its full compass of magnitude and multiplicity of complication, where is the wonder that judging of the whole by parts, I am alternately affected by one and the other as either presses on my memory or fancy? We differ from ourselves just as we differ from each other, when we see only part of the question, as in the multifarious relations of politics and morality; but when we perceive the whole at once, as in numerical computations, all agree in one judgment, and none ever varies in his opinion."

"Let us not add," said the prince, "to the other evils

of life, the bitterness of controversy, nor endeavour to vie with each other in subtilities of argument. We are employed in a search, of which both are equally to enjoy the success, or suffer by the miscarriage. It is therefore fit that we assist each other. You surely conclude too hastily from the infelicity of marriage against its institution: will not the misery of life prove equally that life cannot be the gift of heaven? The world must be peopled by marriage, or people [illegible]

"How the w[illegible] peopled," returned Nekayah, "is not my care, and nee[illegible] not be yours. I see no danger that the present generation should omit to leave successors behind them: we are not now inquiring for the world, but for ourselves."

CHAP. XXIX.

THE DEBATE ON MARRIAGE CONTINUED.

"The good of the whole," says Rasselas, "is the same with the good of all its parts. If marriage be best for mankind, it must be evidently best for individuals, or a permanent and necessary duty must be the cause of evil, and some must be inevitably sacrificed to the convenience of others. In the estimate which you have made of the two states, it appears that the incommodities of a single life are, in a great measure, necessary and certain, but those of the conjugal state accidental and unavoidable.

"I cannot forbear to flatter myself, that prudence and benevolence will make marriage happy. The general folly of mankind is the cause of general complaint. What can be expected but disappointment and repentance from a choice made in the immaturity of youth, in the ardour of desire, without judgment, without foresight, without inquiry after conformity of opinions, similarity of manners, rectitude of judgment, or purity of sentiment?

"Such is the common process of marriage. A youth or maiden meeting by chance, or brought together by artifice, exchange glances, reciprocate civilities, go home and dream of one another. Having little to divert attention, or diversify thought, they find themselves uneasy when they are apart, and therefore conclude that they shall be happy together. They marry, and discover what nothing but voluntary blindness before had concealed; they wear out life in altercations, and charge nature with cruelty.

"From those early marriages proceeds likewise the rivalry of parents and children: the son is eager to enjoy the world before the father is willing to forsake it, and there is hardly room at once for two generations. The daughter begins to bloom before the mother can be content to fade, and neither can forbear to wish for the absence of the other.

"Surely all these evils may be avoided by the deliberation and delay which prudence prescribes to irrevocable choice. In the variety and jollity of youthful pleasures, life may be well enough supported without the help of a partner. Longer time will increase experience, and wider views will allow better opportunities of inquiry and selection: one advantage at least will be certain; the parents will be visibly older than their children."

"What reason can collect," said Nekayah, "and what experiment has not yet taught, can be known only from the report of others. I have been told that late marriages are not eminently happy. This is a question too important to be neglected, and I have often proposed it to those, whose accuracy of remark, and comprehensiveness of knowledge, made their suffrages worthy of regard. They have generally determined, that it is dangerous for a man and woman to suspend their fate upon each other, at a time when opinions are fixed, and habits are established: when friendships have been contracted on both sides, when life has been planned into method, and the mind has long enjoyed the contemplation of its own prospects.

"It is scarcely possible that two travelling through the world under the conduct of chance, should have been both directed to the same path, and it will not often happen that either will quit the track which custom has made pleasing. When the desultory levity of youth has settled into regularity, it is soon succeeded by pride ashamed to yield, or obstinacy delighting to contend. And even though mutual esteem produces mutual desire to please, time itself, as it modifies unchangeably the external mien, determines likewise the direction of the passions, and gives an inflexible rigidity to the manners. Long customs are not easily broken: he that attempts to change the course of his own life very often labours in vain; and how shall we do that for others, which we are seldom able to do for ourselves?"

"But surely," interposed the prince, "you suppose the chief motive of choice forgotten or neglected. Whenever I shall seek a wife, it shall be my first question, whether she be willing to be led by reason?"

"Thus it is," said Nekayah, "that philosophers are deceived. There are a thousand familiar disputes which reason can never decide; questions that elude investigation and make logic ridiculous; cases where something must be done, and where little can be said. Consider the state of mankind, and inquire how few can be supposed to act upon any occasions, whether small or great, with all the reasons of actions present to their minds. Wretched would be the pair above all names of wretchedness, who should be doomed to adjust, by reason, every morning, all the minute detail of a domestic day.

"Those who marry at an advanced age, will probably escape the encroachments of their children: but in diminution of this advantage, they will be likely to leave them, ignorant and helpless, to a guardian's mercy: or, if that should not happen, they must at least go out of the world before they see those whom they love best, either wise or great.

"From their children, if they have less to fear, they have less also to hope, and they lose, without equivalent, the joys of early love, and the convenience of uniting with manners pliant, and minds susceptible of new impressions, which might wear away their dissimilitudes by long cohabitation,

his scent with the flowers of the spring: no man can, at the same time, fill his cup from the source and from the mouth of the Nile."

CHAP. XXX.

IMLAC ENTERS, AND CHANGES THE CONVERSATION.

HERE Imlac entered and interrupted them. "Imlac," said Rasselas, "I have been taking from the princess the dismal history of private life, and am almost discouraged from further search."

"It seems to me," said Imlac, "that while you are making the choice of life, you neglect to live. You wander about a single city, which, however large and diversified, can now afford few novelties, and forget that you are in a country, famous among the earliest monarchies for the power and wisdom of its inhabitants: a country where the sciences first dawned that illuminate the world, and beyond which the arts cannot be traced of civil society or domestic life.

"The old Egyptians have left behind them monuments of industry and power, before which all European magnificence is confessed to fade away. The ruins of their architecture are the schools of modern builders: and from the wonders which time has spared, we may conjecture, though uncertainly, what it has destroyed."

"My curiosity," said Rasselas, "does not very strongly lead me to survey piles of stone, or mounds of earth; my business is with man. I came hither not to measure fragments of temples, or trace choked aqueducts, but to look upon the various scenes of the present world."

"The things that are now before us," said the princess, "require attention and deserve it. What have I to do with the heroes or the monuments of ancient times? with times which never can return, and heroes whose form of life was different from all that the present condition of mankind requires or allows."

"To know any thing," returned the poet, "we must know its effects: to see men we must see their works, that we may learn what reason has dictated or passion has incited, and find what are the most powerful motives of action. To judge rightly of the present we must oppose it to the past; for all judgment is comparative, and of the future nothing can be known. The truth is, that no mind is much employed upon

the present: recollection and anticipation fill up almost all our moments. Our passions are joy and grief, love and hatred, hope and fear. Of joy and grief the past is the object, and the future of hope and fear; even love and hatred respect the past, for the cause must have been before the effect.

"The present state of things is the consequence of the former, and it is natural to inquire what were the sources of the good that we enjoy, or the evil that we suffer. If we act only for ourselves, to neglect the study of history is not prudent: if we are intrusted with the care of others, it is not just. Ignorance when it is voluntary, is criminal; and he may properly be charged with evil, who refused to learn how he might prevent it.

"There is no part of history so generally useful as that which relates the progress of the human mind, the gradual improvement of reason, the successive advances of science, the vicissitudes of learning and ignorance, which are the light and darkness of thinking beings, the extinction and resuscitation of arts, and the revolutions of the intellectual world. If accounts of battles and invasions are peculiarly the business of princes, the useful or elegant arts are not to be neglected; those who have kingdoms to govern have understandings to cultivate.

"Example is always more efficacious than precept. A soldier is formed in war, and a painter must copy pictures.—In this, contemplative life has the advantage: great actions are seldom seen, but the labours of art are always at hand for those who desire to know what art has been able to perform.

"When the eye or the imagination is struck with an uncommon work, the next transition of an active mind is to the means by which it was performed. Here begins the true use of such contemplation; we enlarge our comprehension by new ideas, and perhaps recover some art lost to mankind, or learn what is less perfectly known in our own country. At least we compare our own with former times, and either rejoice at our improvements, or what is the first motion towards good, discover our defects."

"I am willing," said the prince, "to see all that can deserve my search." "And I," said the princess, "shall rejoice to learn something of the manners of antiquity."

"The most pompous monument of Egyptian greatness, and one of the most bulky works of manual industry," said Imlac, "are the pyramids; fabrics raised before the time of history, and of which the earliest narratives afford us only

uncertain traditions. Of these, the greatest is still standing very little injured by time."

"Let us visit them to-morrow," said Nekayah. "I have often heard of the pyramids, and shall not rest till I have seen them within and without with my own eyes."

CHAP. XXXI.

THEY VISIT THE PYRAMIDS.

The resolution being thus taken, they set out the next day. They laid tents upon their camels, being resolved to stay among the pyramids till their curiosity was fully satisfied. They travelled gently, turned aside to every thing remarkable, stopped from time to time and conversed with the inhabitants, and observed the various appearances of towns ruined and inhabited, of wild and uncultivated nature.

When they came to the great pyramid, they were astonished at the extent of the base, and the height of the top. Imlac explained to them the principles upon which the pyramidal form was chosen for a fabric, intended to co-extend its duration with that of the world: he showed that its gradual diminution gave it such stability, as defeated all the common attacks of the elements, and could scarcely be overthrown by earthquakes themselves, the least resistible of natural violence. A concussion that should shatter the pyramid would threaten the dissolution of the continent.

They measured all its dimensions, and pitched their tents at its foot. Next day they prepared to enter its interior apartments, and having hired the common guides, climed up to the first passage, when the favourite of the princess, looking into the cavity, stepped back and trembled. "Pekuah," said the princess, "of what art thou afraid?" "Of the narrow entrance," answered the lady, "and of the dreadful gloom. I dare not enter a place which must surely be inhabited by unquiet souls. The original possessors of these dreadful vaults will start up before us, and perhaps shut us in for ever." She spoke, and threw her arms round the neck of her mistress.

"If all your fear be of apparitions," said the prince, "I will promise you safety: there is no danger from the dead; he that is once buried will be seen no more."

"That the dead are seen no more," said Imlac, "I will not undertake to maintain, against the concurrent and unva-

ried testimony of all ages, and of all nations. There is
people, rude or learned, among whom apparitions of the de
are not related and believed. This opinion, which perha
prevails as far as human nature is diffused, could becom
universal only by its truth: those, that never heard of o
another, would not have agreed in a tale which nothing b
experience can make credible. That it is doubted by sing
cavillers, can very little weaken the general evidence
and some who deny it with their tongue confess it by the
fears.

"Yet I do not mean to add new terrors to those which ha
already seized upon Pekuah. There can be no reason wh
spectres should haunt the pyramid more than other place
or why they should have power or will to hurt innocen
and purity. Our entrance is no violation of their privileg
we can take nothing from them, how then can we offe
them?"

"My dear Pekuah," said the princess, "I will alway
go before you, and Imlac shall follow you. Remember th
you are the companion of the princess of Abyssinia."

"If the princess is pleased that her servant should die,
returned the lady, "let her command some death less drea
ful than enclosure in this horrid cavern. You know I da
not disobey you: I must go if you command me; but if
once enter, I shall never come back."

The princess saw that her fear was too strong for expost
lation or reproof, and embracing her, told her that she shou
stay in the tent till their return. Pekuah was not yet sati
fied, but entreated the princess not to pursue so dreadful
purpose as that of entering the recesses of the pyramid
"Though I cannot teach courage," said Nekayah, "I mu
not learn cowardice; nor leave at last undone what I cam
hither only to do."

CHAP. XXXII.

THEY ENTER THE PYRAMID.

Pekuah descended to the tents, and the rest entered the pyramid: they passed through the galleries, surveyed the vaults of marble, and examined the chest in which the body of the founder is supposed to have been reposited. They then sat down in one of the most spacious chambers to rest awhile before they attempted to return.

"We have now," said Imlac, "gratified our minds with an exact view of the greatest work of man, except the wall of China.

"Of the wall it is very easy to assign the motive. It secured a wealthy and timorous nation from the incursions of barbarians, whose unskilfulness of arts made it easier for them to supply their wants by rapine than by industry, and who from time to time poured in upon the habitations of peaceful commerce, as vultures descended upon domestic fowl. Their celerity and fierceness, made the wall necessary, and their ignorance made it efficacious.

"But for the pyramids no reason has ever been given adequate to the cost and labour of the work. The narrowness of the chambers proves that it could afford no retreat from enemies, and treasures might have been reposited at far less expense with equal security. I seems to have been erected only in compliance with that hunger of imagination which preys incessantly upon life, and must be always appeased by some employment. Those who have already all that they can enjoy must enlarge their desires. He that has built for use, till use is supplied, must begin to build for vanity, and extend his plan to the utmost power of human performance, that he may not be soon reduced to form another wish.

"I consider this mighty structure as a monument of the insufficiency of human enjoyments. A king whose power is unlimited, and whose treasures surmount all real and imaginary wants, is compelled to solace, by the erection of a pyramid, the satiety of dominion and tastelessness of pleasures, and to amuse the tediousness of declining life, by seeing thousands labouring without end, and one stone, for no purpose, laid upon another. Whoever thou art, that, not content with a moderate condition, imaginest happiness in royal magnificence, and dreamest that command or riches can feed the appetite of novelty with perpetual gratifications, survey the pyramids and confess thy folly!"

CHAP. XXXIII.

THE PRINCESS MEETS WITH AN UNEXPECTED MISFORTUNE.

They rose up, and returned through the cavity at which they had entered, and the princess prepared for her favourite a long narrative of dark labyrinths, and costly rooms, and of the different impressions which the varieties of the way had

made upon her. But when they came to their train, they found every one silent and dejected: the men discovered shame and fear in their countenances, and the women were weeping in the tents.

What had happened they did not try to conjecture, but immediately inquired. "You had scarcely entered into the pyramid," said one of the attendants, "when a troop of Arabs rushed upon [illegible] few to resist them, and too slow to escape. [illegible] to search the tents, set us on our camels, [illegible] before them, when the approach of som[illegible] put them to flight; but they seized th[illegible] her two maids, and carried them away: [illegible] pursuing them by our instigation, but I [illegible] able to overtake them."

The princes[illegible] with surprise and grief. Rasselas, in th[illegible] resentment, ordered his servants to follo[illegible] red to pursue the robbers with his sabre in his hand. "Sir," said Imlac, "what can you hope from violence or valour? The Arabs are mounted on horses trained to battle and retreat; we have only beasts of burden. By leaving our present station we may lose the princess, but cannot hope to regain Pekuah."

In a short time the Turks returned, having not been able to reach the enemy. The princess burst out into new lamentations, and Rasselas could scarcely forbear to reproach them with cowardice; but Imlac was of opinion that the escape of the Arabs was no addition to their misfortune, for perhaps they would have killed their captives rather than have resigned them.

CHAP. XXXIV.

THEY RETURN TO CAIRO WITHOUT PEKUAH.

THERE was nothing to be hoped from longer stay. They returned to Cairo repenting of their curiosity, censuring the negligence of the government, lamenting their own rashness which had neglected to procure a guard, imagining many expedients by which the loss of Pekuah might have been prevented, and resolving to do something for her rec[illegible] though none could find any thing proper to be done.

Nekayah retired to her chamber, where her women at[illegible] ed to comfort her, by telling her that all had their [illegible] and that lady Pekuah had enjoyed much happines[illegible]

world for a long time, and might reasonably expect a change of fortune. They hoped that some good would befall her wheresoever she was, and that their mistress would find another friend who might supply her place.

The princess made them no answer, and they continued the form of condolence, not much grieved in their hearts that the favourite was lost.

Next day the prince presented to the Bassa a memorial of the wrong which he had suffered, and a petition for redress. The Bassa threatened to punish the robbers, but did not attempt to catch them, nor, indeed, could any account or description be given by which he might direct the pursuit.

It soon appeared that nothing would be done by authority. Governors, being accustomed to hear of more crimes than they can punish, and more wrongs than they can redress, set themselves at ease by indiscriminate negligence, and presently forget the request when they lose sight of the petitioner.

Imlac then endeavoured to gain some intelligence by private agents. He found many who pretended to an exact knowledge of all the haunts of the Arabs, and to regular correspondence with their chiefs, and who readily undertook the recovery of Pekuah. Of these, some were furnished with money for their journey, and came back no more; some were liberally paid for accounts which a few days discovered to be false. But the princess would not suffer any means, however improbable, to be left untried. While she was doing something she kept her hope alive. As one expedient failed, another was suggested; when one messenger returned unsuccessful, another was despatched to a different quarter.

Two months had now passed, and of Pekuah nothing had been heard; the hopes which they had endeavoured to raise in each other grew more languid, and the princess, when she saw nothing more to be tried, sunk down inconsolable in hopeless dejection. A thousand times she reproached herself with the easy compliance, by which she permitted her favourite to stay behind her. "Had not my fondness," said she, "lessened my authority, Pekuah had not dared to talk of her terrors. She ought to have feared me more than spectres. A severe look would have overpowered her; a peremptory command would have compelled obedience. Why did foolish indulgence prevail upon me? Why did not I speak, and refuse to hear?"

"Great princess," said Imlac, "do not reproach yourself for your virtue, or consider that as blameable by which evil has accidentally been caused. Your tenderness for the timi-

dity of Pekuah was generous and kind. When we act according to our duty, we commit the event to him by whose laws our actions are governed, and who will suffer none to be finally punished for obedience. When, in prospect of some good, whether natural or moral, we break the rules prescribed us, we withdraw from the direction of superior wisdom, and take all consequences upon ourselves. Man cannot so far know the connection of causes and events, as that he may venture to do wrong in order to do right. When we pursue our end by lawful means, we may always console our miscarriage by the hope of future recompense. When we consult only our own policy, and attempt to find a nearer way to good, by overleaping the settled boundaries of right and wrong, we cannot be happy even by success, because we cannot escape the consciousness of our fault; but if we miscarry the disappointment is irremediably embittered. How comfortless is the sorrow of him who feels at once the pangs of guilt, and the vexation of calamity which guilt has brought upon him?

"Consider, princess, what would have been your condition if the lady Pekuah had entreated to accompany you, and being compelled to stay in the tents, had been carried away; or how would you have born the thought, if you had forced her into the pyramid, and she had died before you in agonies of terror?"

"Had either happened," said Nekayah, "I could not have endured life till now: I should have been tortured to madness by the remembrance of such cruelty, or must have pined away in abhorrence of myself."

"This at least," said Imlac, "is the present reward of virtuous conduct, that no unlucky consequence can oblige us to repent it."

CHAP. XXXV.

THE PRINCESS LANGUISHES FOR WANT OF PEKUAH.

Nekayah being thus reconciled to herself, found that no evil is insupportable but that which is accompanied with consciousness of wrong. She was, from that time, delivered from the violence of tempestuous sorrow, and sunk into silent pensiveness and gloomy tranquillity. She sat from morning to evening recollecting all that had been done or said by her Pekuah, treasured up with care every trifle on which Pekuah

had set an accidental value, and which might recall to mind any little incident or careless conversation. The sentiments of her, whom she now expected to see no more, were treasured in her memory as rules of life, and she deliberated to no other end than to conjecture on any occasion what would have been the opinion and counsel of Pekuah.

The women, by whom she was attended, knew nothing of her real condition, and therefore she could not talk to them but with caution and reserve. She began to remit her curiosity, having no great care to collect notions which she had no convenience of uttering. Rasselas endeavoured first to comfort, and afterwards to divert her; he hired musicians, to whom she seemed to listen, but did not hear them, and procured masters to instruct her in various arts, whose lectures, when they visited her again, were again to be repeated. She had lost her taste of pleasure, and her ambition of excellence. And her mind though forced into short excursions, always recurred to the image of her friend.

Imlac was every morning earnestly enjoined to renew his inquiries, and was asked every night whether he had yet heard of Pekuah, till not being able to return the princess the answer that she desired, he was less and less willing to come into her presence. She observed his backwardness, and commanded him to attend her. "You are not," said she, "to confound impatience with resentment, or to suppose that I charge you with negligence, because I repine at your unsuccessfulness. I do not much wonder at your absence; I know that the unhappy are never pleasing, and that all naturally avoid the contagion of misery. To hear complaints is wearisome alike to the wretched and the happy; for who would cloud, by adventitious grief, the short gleams of gaiety which life allows us? or who that is struggling under his own evils, will add to them the miseries of another?

"The time is at hand, when none shall be disturbed any longer by the sighs of Nekayah: my search after happiness is now at an end. I am resolved to retire from the world with all its flatteries and deceits, and will hide myself in solitude without any other care than to compose my thoughts, and regulate my hours by a constant succession of innocent occupations, till, with a mind purified from all earthly desires, I shall enter into that state, to which all are hastening, and in which I hope again to enjoy the friendship of Pekuah."

"Do not entangle your mind," said Imlac, "by irrevocable determinations, nor increase the burden of life by a voluntary accumulation of misery: the weariness of retirement will continue or increase when the loss of Pekuah is forgotten.

That you have been deprived of one pleasure, is no very good reason for rejecting of the rest."

"Since Pekuah was taken from me," said the princess, "I have no pleasure to reject or to retain. She that has no one to love or trust has little to hope. She wants the radical principle of happiness. We may, perhaps, allow that what satisfaction this world can afford must arise from the conjunction of wea d goodness. Wealth is nothing but as it nowledge nothing but as it is communicate fore be imparted to others, and to whom c to impart them? Goodness affords the only be enjoyed without a partner, and goodr d in retirement."

"How far s goodness, or advance it, I shall not," re te at present. Remember the confession You will wish to return into the world, ge of your companion has left your thoughts." "That time," said Nekayah, "will never come. The generous frankness, the modest obsequiousness, and the faithful secrecy of my dear Pekuah, will always be more missed, as I shall live longer to see vice and folly."

"The state of a mind oppressed with a sudden calamity," said Imlac, "is like that of the fabulous inhabitants of the new-created earth, who, when the first night came upon them, supposed that day would never return. When the clouds of sorrow gather over us, we see nothing beyond them, nor can imagine how they will be dispelled: yet a new day succeeded to the night, and sorrow is never long without a dawn of ease. But they who restrain themselves from receiving comfort, do as the savages would have done, had they put out their eyes when it was dark. Our minds like our bodies, are in continual flux; something is hourly lost, and something acquired. To lose much at once is inconvenient to either, but while the vital powers remain uninjured, nature will find the means of reparation. Distance has the same effect on the mind as on the eye, and while we glide along the stream of time, whatever we leave behind us is always lessening, and that which we approach increasing in magnitude. Do not suffer life to stagnate; it will grow muddy for want of motion: commit yourself again to the current of the world; Pekuah will vanish by degrees: you will meet in your way some other favourite, or learn to diffuse yourself in general conversation."

"At least," said the prince, "do not despair before all remedies have been tried; the inquiry after the unfortunate lady is still continued, and shall be carried on with yet greater

diligence, on condition that you will promise to waita year for the event, without any unalterable resolution."

Nekayah thought this a reasonable demand, and made the promise to her brother, who had been advised by Imlac to require it. Imlac had indeed, no great hope of regaining Pekuah, but he supposed, that if he could secure the interval of a year, the princess would be then in no danger of a cloister.

CHAP. XXXVI.

PEKUAH IS STILL REMEMBERED. THE PROGRESS OF SORROW.

Nekayah, seeing that nothing was omitted for the recovery of her favourite, and having, by her promise, set her intention of retirement at a distance, began imperceptibly to return to common cares and common pleasures. She rejoiced without her own consent at the suspension of her sorrows, and sometimes caught herself with indignation in the act of turning away her mind from the remembrance of her, whom yet she resolved never to forget.

She then appointed a certain hour of the day for meditation on the merits and fondness of Pekuah, and for some weeks retired constantly at the time fixed, and returned with her eyes swollen and her countenance clouded. By degrees she grew less scrupulous, and suffered any important and pressing avocation to delay the tribute of daily tears. She then yielded to less occasions; sometimes forgot what she was indeed afraid to remember, and at last wholly released herself from the duty of periodical affliction.

Her real love of Pekuah was yet not diminished. A thousand occurrences brought her back to memory, and a thousand wants, which nothing but the confidence of friendship can supply, made her frequently regretted. She therefore solicited Imlac never to desist from inquiry, and to leave no art or intelligence untried, that, at least, she might have the comfort of knowing that she did not suffer by negligence or sluggishness. "Yet what," said she, "is to be expected from our pursuit of happiness, when we find the state of life to be such that happiness itself is the cause of misery? Why should we endeavour to attain that, of which the possession cannot

be secured? I shall henceforward fear to yield my heart to excellence, however bright, or to fondness, however tender, lest I should lose again what I have lost in Pekuah."

[illegible]VII.

THE PRINCESS [illegible]WS OF PEKUAH.

In seven months, one [illegible] engers, who had been sent away upon the [illegible] ise was drawn from the princess, return [illegible] ccessful rambles from the borders of Nubia, [illegible] t that Pekuah was in the hands of an Arab chief, who possessed a castle or fortress on the extremity of Egypt. The Arab, whose revenue was plunder, was willing to restore her, with her two attendants, for two hundred ounces of gold.

The price was no subject of debate. The princess was in ecstacies when she heard that her favourite was alive, and might so cheaply be ransomed. She could not think of delaying for a moment Pekuah's happiness or her own, but entreated her brother to send back the messenger with the sum required. Imlac being consulted, was not very confident of the veracity of the relator, and was still more doubtful of the Arab's faith, who might, if he were too liberally trusted, detain at once the money and the captives. He thought it dangerous to put themselves in the power of the Arab, by going into his district, and could not expect that the Rover would so much expose himself as to come into the lower country, where he might be seized by the forces of the Bassa.

It is difficult to negotiate where neither will trust. But Imlac, after some deliberation, directed the messenger to propose that Pekuah should be conducted by ten horsemen to the monastery of St. Antony, which is situated in the deserts of Upper Egypt, where she should be met by the same number, and her ransom should be paid.

That no time might be lost, as they expected that the proposal would not be refused, they immediately began their journey to the monastery; and when they arrived, Imlac went forward with the former messenger to the Arab's fortress. Rasselas was desious to go with them; but neither his sister nor Imlac would consent. The Arab, according to the custom of his nation, observed the laws of hospitality.

with great exactness to those who put themselves into his power, and in a few days, brought Pekuah with her maids, by easy journeys, to the place appointed, where, receiving the stipulated price, he restored her with great respect to liberty and her friends, and undertook to conduct them back towards Cairo, beyond all danger of robbery or violence.

The princess and her favourite embraced each other with transport too violent to be expressed, and went out together to pour the tears of tenderness in secret, and exchange professions of kindness and gratitude. After a few hours they returned into the refectory of the convent, where, in the presence of the prior and his brethren, the prince required of Pekuah the history of her adventures.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

THE ADVENTURES OF THE LADY PEKUAH.

"At what time, and in what manner, I was forced away," said Pekuah, "your servants have told you. The suddenness of the event struck me with surprise, and I was at first rather stupified than agitated with any passion of either fear or sorrow. My confusion was increased by the speed and tumult of our flight, while we were followed by the Turks, who, as it seemed, soon despaired to overtake us, or were afraid of those whom they made a show of menacing.

"When the Arabs saw themselves out of danger, they slackened their course, and as I was less harassed by external violence, I began to feel more uneasiness in my mind. After some time we stopped near a spring shaded with trees, in a pleasant meadow, where we were set upon the ground, and offered such refreshments as our masters were partaking. I was suffered to sit with my maids apart from the rest, and none attempted to comfort or insult us. Here I first began to feel the full weight of my misery. The girls sat weeping in silence, and from time to time looked on me for succour. I know not to what condition we were doomed, nor could conjecture where would be the place of our captivity, or whence to draw any hope of deliverance. I was in the hands of robbers and savages, and had no reason to suppose that their pity was more than their justice, or that they would forbear the gratification of any ardour of desire, or caprice of cruelty. I, however, kissed my maids, and endeavoured

to pacify them by remarking, that we were yet treated with decency, and that, since we were now carried beyond pursuit, there was no danger of violence to our lives.

"When we were to be set again on horseback, my maids clung round me and refused to be parted, but I commanded them not to irritate those who had us in their power. We travelled the remaining part of the day through an unfrequented and pathless [illegible] d came by moon-light to the side of a hill, where [illegible] of the troop was stationed. Their tents were pitched, [illegible] their fires kindled, and our chief was welcomed as a man much beloved by his dependents.

"We were received into a large tent, where we found women who attended their husbands in the expedition. They set before us the supper which they had provided, and I eat it rather to encourage my maids than to comply with any appetite of my own. When the meat was taken away, they spread the carpet for repose. I was weary, and hoped to find in sleep that remission of distress which nature seldom denies. Ordering myself, therefore, to be undrest, I observed that the women looked very earnestly upon me, not expecting, I suppose, to see me so submissively attended. When my upper vestment was taken off, they were apparently struck with the splendour of my clothes, and one of them timorously laid her hand upon the embroidery. She then went out, and in a short time came back with another woman, who seemed to be of higher rank, and greater authority. She did, at her entrance, the usual act of reverence, and taking me by the hand, placed me in a smaller tent, spread with finer carpets, where I spent the night quietly with my maids.

"In the morning, as I was sitting on the grass, the chief of the troop came towards me. I rose up to receive him, and he bowed with great respect. 'Illustrious lady,' said he, 'my fortune is better than I presumed to hope; I am told by my women, that I have a princess in my camp.' 'Sir,' answered I, 'your women have deceived themselves and you; I am not a princess, but an unhappy stranger, who intended soon to have left this country, in which I am now to be imprisoned for ever.' 'Whoever, or whencesoever you are,' returned the Arab, 'your dress, and that of your servants, show your rank to be high, and your wealth to be great. Why should you, who can so easily procure your ransom, think yourself in danger of perpetual captivity! The purpose of my incursions is to increase my riches, or, more properly, to gather tribute. The sons of Ishmael are the

natural and hereditary lords of this part of the continent, which is usurped by late invaders, and low-born tyrants, from whom we are compelled to take by the sword what is denied to justice. The violence of war admits of no distinction: the lance that is lifted at guilt and power, will sometimes fall on innocence and gentleness!"

"'How little,' said I, 'did I expect yesterday that it should have fallen upon me!'

"'Misfortunes,' answered the Arab, 'should always be expected. If the eye of hostility could learn reverence or pity, excellence like yours had been exempt from injury. But the angels of affliction spread their toils alike for the virtuous and the wicked, for the mighty and the mean. Do not be disconsolate: I am not one of the lawless and cruel rovers of the desert; I know the rules of civil life: I will fix your ransom, and give a passport to your messenger, and perform my stipulation with nice punctuality.'

"You will easily believe that I was pleased with his courtesy: and finding that his predominant passion was desire of money, I began now to think my danger less, for I knew that no sum would be thought too great for the release of Pekuah. I told him that he should have no reason to charge me with ingratitude, if I was used with kindness, and that any ransom which could be expected for a maid of common rank, would be paid; but that he must not persist to rate me as a princess. He said he would consider what he should demand, and then smiling, bowed and retired.

"Soon after the women came about me, each contending to be more officious than the other, and my maids themselves were served with reverence. We travelled onward by short journeys. On the fourth day the chief told me, that my ransom must be two hundred ounces of gold; which I not only promised him, but told him, that I would add fifty more, if I and my maids were honourably treated.

"I never knew the power of gold before. From that time I was the leader of the troop. The march of every day was longer or shorter, as I commanded, and the tents were pitched where I chose to rest. We now had camels and other conveniencies for travel, my own women were always at my side, and I amused myself with observing the manners of the vagrant nations, and with viewing remains of ancient edifices, with which these deserted countries appear to have been, in some distant age, lavishly embellished.

"The chief of the band was a man far from illiterate: he was able to travel by the stars or the compass, and had marked in his erratic expeditions, such places as are most worthy

the notice of a passenger. He observed to me, that buildings are always best preserved in places little frequented, and difficult of access: for, when once a country declines from its primitive splendour the more inhabitants are left, the quicker ruin will be made. Walls supply stones more easily than quarries, and palaces and temples will be demolished, to make stables of granite, and cottages of porphyry.

CHAP. XXXIX.

THE A[illegible]EKUAH CONTINUED.

"We wand[illegible]s manner for some weeks, whether, as ou[illegible] for my gratification, or as I rather suspect[illegible]nience of his own. I endeavoured to appear contented where sullenness and resentment would have been of no use, and that endeavour conduced much to the calmness of my mind: but my heart was always with Nekayah, and the troubles of the night much overbalanced the amusements of the day. My women, who threw all their cares upon their mistress, set their minds at ease from the time when they saw me treated with respect, and gave themselves up to the incidental alleviations of our fatigue without solicitude or sorrow. I was pleased with their pleasure, and animated with their confidence. My condition had lost much of its terror, since I found that the Arab ranged the country merely to get riches. Avarice is an uniform and tractable vice: other intellectual distempers are different in different constitutions of mind; that which sooths the pride of one will offend the pride of another; but to the favour of the covetous there is a ready way; bring money and nothing is denied.

"At last we came to the dwelling of our chief, a strong and spacious house, built with stone in an island of the Nile, which lies, as I was told, under the tropic. "Lady," said the Arab, "you shall rest after your journey a few weeks in this place, where you are to consider yourself as sovereign. My occupation is war: I have therefore chosen this obscure residence, from which I can issue unexpected, and to which I can retire unpursued. You may now repose in secu[illegible] here are few pleasures, but here is no danger." He th[illegible] me into the inner apartments, and seating me on the r[illegible] couch, bowed to the ground. His women, who co[illegible] me as a rival, looked on me with malignity; but bei[illegible]

informed that I was a great lady detained only for my ransom, they began to vie with each other in obsequiousness and reverence.

"Being again comforted with new assurances of speedy liberty, I was for some days diverted from impatience by the novelty of the place. The turrets overlooked the country to a great distance and afforded a view of many windings of the stream. In the day I wandered from one place to another, as the course of the sun varied the splendour of the prospect, and saw many things which I had never seen before. The crocodiles and river-horses are common in this unpeopled region, and I often looked upon them with terror, though I knew that they could not hurt me. For some time I expected to see mermaids and tritons, which, as Imlac has told me, the European travellers have stationed in the Nile, but no such beings ever appeared, and the Arab, when I inquired after them, laughed at my credulity.

"At night the Arab always attended me to a tower set apart for celestial observations, where he endeavoured to teach me the names and courses of the stars. I had no great inclination to this study, but an appearance of attention was necessary to please my instructor, who valued himself for his skill; and in a little while I found some employment requisite to beguile the tediousness of time, which was to be passed always amidst the same objects. I was weary of looking in the morning on things from which I had turned away weary in the evening: I therefore was at last willing to observe the stars rather than do nothing, but could not always compose my thoughts, and was very often thinking on Nekayah, when others imagined me contemplating the sky. Soon after the Arab went upon another expedition, and then my only pleasure was to talk with my maids about the accident by which we were carried away, and the happiness that we should all enjoy at the end of our captivity."

"There were women in your Arab's fortress," said the princess, "why did you not make them your companions, enjoy their conversation, and partake their diversions? In a place where they found business or amusement, why should you alone sit corroded with idle melancholy? or why could not you bear, for a few months, that condition to which they were condemned for life?"

"The diversions of the women," answered Pekuah, "were only childish play, by which the mind, accustomed to stronger operations, could not be kept busy. I could do all which they delighted in doing, by powers merely sensitive, while my intellectual faculties were flown to Cairo. They ran from room

to room as a bird hops from wire to wire in his cage. They danced for the sake of motion, as lambs frisk in a meadow. One sometimes pretended to be hurt, that the rest might be alarmed; or hid herself, that another might seek her. Part of their time passed in watching the progress of light bodies that floated on the river, and part in marking the various forms into which clouds broke in the sky.

"Their business was only needle-work, in which I and my maids sometimes helped them; but you know that the mind will easily straggle from the finger, nor will you suspect that captivity and absence from Nekayah could receive solace from silken flowers.

"Nor was much satisfaction to be hoped from their conversation: for of what could they be expected to talk? They had seen nothing; for they had lived from early youth in that narrow spot: of what they had not seen they could have no knowledge, for they could not read. They had no ideas but of the few things that were within their view, and had hardly names for any thing but their clothes and their food. As I bore a superior character, I was often called to terminate their quarrels, which I decided as equitably as I could. If it could have amused me to hear the complaints of each against the rest, I might have been often detained by long stories: but the motives of their animosity were so small that I could not listen without intercepting the tale."

"How," said Rasselas, "can the Arab whom you represented as a man of more than common accomplishments, take any pleasure in his seraglio, when it is filled only with women like these? Are they exquisitely beautiful?"

"They do not," said Pekuah, "want that unaffecting and ignoble beauty which may subsist without sprightliness or sublimity, without energy of thought or dignity of virtue. But to a man like the Arab, such beauty was only a flower casually plucked and carelessly thrown away. Whatever pleasures he might find among them, they were not those of friendship or society. When they were playing about him he looked on them with inattentive superiority: when they vied for his regard, he sometimes turned away disgusted. As they had no knowledge, their talk could take nothing from the tediousness of life: as they had no choice, their fondness, or appearance of fondness, excited in him neither pride nor gratitude: he was not exalted in his own esteem by the smiles of a woman who saw no other man, nor was much obliged by that regard, of which he could never know the sincerity, and which he might often perceive to be exerted, not so much to delight him as to pain a rival. That which he gave, and they

red, as love, was only a careless distribution of super-
time, such love as man can bestow upon that which
spises, such has neither hope nor fear, neither joy nor
w."

'ou have reason, lady, to think yourself happy," said
, "that you have been thus easily dismissed. How
a mind, hungry for knowledge, be willing, in an intel-
l famine, to lose such a banquet as Pekuah's conversa-
"

am inclined to believe," answered Pekuah, "that he
for some time in suspense: for, notwithstanding his
ise, whenever I proposed to despatch a messenger to
, he found some excuse for delay. While I was detained
house he made many incursions into the neighbouring
ries, and perhaps, he would have refused to discharge
ad his plunder been equal to his wishes. He returned
's courteous, related his adventures, delighted to hear
servations, and endeavoured to advance my acquaint-
with the stars. When I importuned him to send away
tters, he soothed me with professions of honour and sin-
; and when I could be no longer decently denied, put
oop again in motion, and left me to govern in his ab-
. I was much afflicted by this studied procrastination,
as sometimes afraid that I should be forgotten; that
ould leave Cairo, and I must end my days in an island
Nile.

grew at last hopeless and dejected, and cared so little
ertain him, that he for a while more frequently talked
my maids. That he should fall in love with them, or
ne, might have been equally fatal, and I was not much
d with the growing friendship. My anxiety was not
for as I recovered some degree of cheerfulnesss he
ed to me, and I could not forbear to despise my former
iness.

e still delayed to send for my ransom, and would, per-
never have determined, had not your agent found his
to him. The gold, which he would not fetch, he could
ject when it was offered. He hastened to prepare for
urney hither, like a man delivered from the pain of an
ne conflict. I took leave of my companions in the house,
dismissed me with cold indifference."

kayah having heard her favourite's relation, rose and
ced her, and Rasselas gave her an hundred ounces of
which she presented to the Arab for the fifty that were
sed.

CHAP. XL.

THE HISTORY OF A MAN OF LEARNING.

THEY returned to Cairo, and were so well pleased at findin themselves together, that none of them went much abroa The prince began to love learning, and one day declared t Imlac, that he intended to devote himself to science, and pa the rest of his days in literary solitude.

"Before you make your final choice," answered Imla "you ought to examine its hazards, and converse with som of those who are grown old in the company of themselves. have just left the observatory of one of the most learne astronomers in the world, who has spent forty years in un wearied attention to the motions and appearances of th celestial bodies, and has drawn out his soul in endless calcu lations. He admits a few friends once a month to hear his deductions and enjoy his discoveries. I was introduced as a man of knowledge worthy of his notice. Men of various ideas, and fluent conversation, are commonly welcome to those whose thoughts have been long fixed upon a single point, and who find the images of other things stealing away. I delighted him with my remarks; he smiled at the narrative of my travels, and was glad to forget the constellations, and descend a moment to the lower world.

"On the next day of vacation, I renewed my visit, and was so fortunate as to please again. He relaxed from that

contemplation of the skies, but the practice of virtue is commanded.' "

"Surely," said the princess, "this man is happy!"

"I visited him," said Imlac, "with more and more frequency, and was every time more enamoured of his conversation: he was sublime without haughtiness, courteous without formality, and communicative without ostentation. I was at first, great princess, of your opinion, thought him the happiest of mankind, and often congratulated him on the blessing that he enjoyed. He seemed to hear nothing with indifference but the praises of his condition, to which he always returned a general answer, and diverted the conversation to some other topic.

"Amidst this willingness to be pleased, and labour to please, I had quickly reason to imagine that some painful sentiment pressed upon his mind. He often looked up earnestly towards the sun, and let his voice fall in the midst of his discourse. He would sometimes, when we were alone, gaze upon me in silence with the air of a man who longed to speak what he has yet resolved to suppress. He would often send for me with vehement injunctions of haste, though, when I came to him, he had nothing extraordinary to say. And sometimes, when I was leaving him, would call me back, pause a few moments, and then dismiss me."

CHAP. XLI.

THE ASTRONOMER DISCOVERS THE CAUSE OF HIS UNEASINESS.

"At last the time came when the secret burst his reserve. We were sitting together last night in the turret of his house, watching the emersion of a satellite of Jupiter. A sudden tempest clouded the sky, and disappointed our observation. We sat awhile silent in the dark, and then he addressed himself to me in these words: 'Imlac, I have long considered thy friendship as the greatest blessing of my life. Integrity without knowledge is weak and useless, and knowledge without integrity is dangerous and dreadful. I have found in thee all the qualities requisite for trust, benevolence, experience, and fortitude. I have long discharged an office which I must soon quit at the call of nature, and shall rejoice in the hour of imbecility and pain to devolve it upon thee.'

"I thought myself honoured by this testimony, and protested that whatever could conduce to his happiness would add likewise to mine.

"Hear, Imlac, what thou wilt not without difficulty credit. I have possessed for five years the regulation of weather, and the distribution of the seasons: the sun has listened to my dictates, and passed from tropic to tropic by my direction; the clouds, a[illegible]ured their waters, and the Nile has over[illegible]and; I have restrained the rage of the do[illegible]ed the fervours of the crab. The winds alo[illegible]ental powers, have hitherto refused my au[illegible]ides have perished by equinoctial tempes[illegible]yself unable to prohibit or restrain. I h[illegible]his great office with exact justice, and n[illegible]nations of the earth an impartial divide[illegible]ine. What must have been the misery of [illegible] I had limited the clouds to particular regions, or confined the sun to either side of the equator!"

CHAP. XLII.

THE OPINION OF THE ASTRONOMER IS EXPLAINED AND JUSTIFIED.

"I SUPPOSE he discovered in me, through the obscurity of the room, some tokens of amazement and doubt, for, after a short pause, he proceeded thus:"

"Not to be easily credited will neither surprise nor offend me; for I am probably, the first of human beings to whom this trust has been imparted. Nor do I know whether to deem this distinction a reward or punishment; since I have possessed it I have been far less happy than before, and nothing but the consciousness of good intention could have enabled me to support the weariness of unremitted vigilance."

"How long, Sir," said I, "has this great office been in your hands?"

"About ten years ago," said he, "my daily observations of the changes of the sky led me to consider, whether, if I had the power of the seasons, I could confer greater plenty upon the inhabitants of the earth. This contemplation fastened on my mind. and I sat days and nights in imaginary *dominion*, pouring upon this country and that the showers of

fertility, and seconding every fall of rain with a due proportion of sunshine. I had yet only the will to do good, and did not imagine that I should ever have the power.

"One day, as I was looking on the fields withering with heat, I felt in my mind a sudden wish that I could send rain on the southern mountains, and raise the Nile to an inundation. In the hurry of my imagination, I commanded rain to fall, and by comparing the time of my command with that of the inundation, I found that the clouds had listened to my lips."

"Might not some other cause," said I, "produce this concurrence? the Nile does not always rise on the same day."

"Do not believe," said he, with impatience, "that such objections could escape me; I reasoned long against my own conviction, and laboured against truth with the utmost obstinacy. I sometimes suspected myself of madness, and should not have dared to impart this secret but to a man like you, capable of distinguishing the wonderful from the impossible, and the incredible from the false."

"Why, Sir," said I, "do you call that incredible, which you know, or think you know, to be true?"

"Because," said he, "I cannot prove it by any external evidence; and I know too well the laws of demonstration to think that my conviction ought to influence another, who cannot, like me, be conscious of its force. I, therefore, shall not attempt to gain credit by disputation. It is sufficient that I feel this power, that I have long possessed, and every day exerted it. But the life of man is short, the infirmities of age increase upon me, and the time will soon come, when the regulator of the year must mingle with the dust. The care of appointing a successor has long disturbed me: the night and the day have been spent in comparisons of all the characters which have come to my knowledge, and I have yet found none so worthy as thyself."

CHAP. XLIII.

THE ASTRONOMER LEAVES IMLAC HIS DIRECTIONS.

"Hear, therefore, what I shall impart with attention, such as the welfare of the world requires. If the task of a king be considered as difficult, who has the care only of a few millions, to whom he cannot do much good or harm, what must

be the anxiety of him, on whom depends the action of the elements, and the great gifts of light and heat!—Hear me therefore with attention.

"I have diligently considered the position of the earth and sun, and formed innumerable schemes in which I changed their situation. I have sometimes turned aside the axis of the earth, and sometimes varied the ecliptic of the sun: but I have found it impossible to make a disposition by which the world may be advantaged; what one region gains, another loses by an imaginable alteration, even without considering the distant parts of the solar system with which we are unacquainted. Do not, therefore, in thy administration of the year, indulge thy pride by innovation: do not please thyself with thinking that thou canst make thyself renowned to all future ages, by disordering the seasons. The memory of mischief is no desirable fame. Much less will it become thee to let kindness or interest prevail. Never rob other countries of rain to pour it on thine own. For us the Nile is sufficient."

"I promised that when I possessed the power, I would use it with inflexible integrity; and he dismissed me, pressing my hand." "My heart," said he, "will be now at rest, and my benevolence will no more destroy my quiet: I have found a

Perhaps, if we speak with rigorous exactness, no human mind is in its right state. There is no man whose imagination does not sometimes predominate over his reason, who can regulate his attention wholly by his will, and whose idess will come and go at his command. No man will be found in whose mind airy notions do not sometimes tyrannize, and force him to hope or fear beyond the limits of sober probability. All power of fancy over reason is a degree of insanity; but while this power is such as we can control and repress, it is not visible to others, nor considered as any depravation of the mental faculties: it is not pronounced madness but when it becomes ungovernable, and apparently influences speech or action.

"To indulge the power of fiction, and send imagination out upon the wing, is often the sport of those who delight too much in silent speculation. When we are alone we are not always busy; the labour of excogitation is too violent to last long; the ardour of inquiry will sometimes give way to idleness or satiety. He who has nothing external that can divert him must find pleasure in his own thoughts and must conceive himself what he is not; for who is pleased with what he is? He then expiates in boundless futurity, and culls from all imaginable conditions that which for the present moment he should most desire, amuses his desires with impossible enjoyments, and confers upon his pride unattainable dominion. The mind dances from scene to scene, unites all pleasures in all combinations, and riots in delights, which nature and fortune, with all their bounty, cannot bestow.

"In time, some particular train of ideas fixes the attention, all other intellectual gratifications are rejected, the mind, in weariness or leisure, recurs constantly to the favourite conception, and feasts on the luscious falsehood, whenever she is offended with the bitterness of truth. By degrees the reign of fancy is confirmed: she grows first imperious, and in time despotic. Then fictions begin to operate as realities, false opinions fasten upon the mind, and life passes in dreams of rapture or of anguish.

"This, Sir, is one of the dangers of solitude, which the hermit has confessed not always to promote goodness, and the astronomer's misery has proved to be not always propitious to wisdom."

"I will no more," said the favourite, "imagine myself the queen of Abyssinia. I have often spent the hours, which the princess gave to my own disposal, in adjusting ceremonie and regulating the court: I have repressed the pride of the powerful, and *granted the* petitions of the poor; I have built

new palaces in more happy situations, planted groves upon the tops of mountains, and have exulted in the beneficence of royalty, till, when the princess entered, I had almost forgotten to bow down before her."

"And I," said the princess, "will not allow myself any more to play the shepherdess in my waking dreams. I have often soothed my thoughts with the quiet and innocence of pastoral empl[illegible] ve in my chamber heard the winds whi[illegible] bleat: sometimes freed the lamb entangled [illegible] d sometimes with my crook encountered the [illegible] ress like that of the village maids, which I [illegible] imagination, and a pipe on which I play [illegible] se myself followed by my flocks."

"I will conf[illegible] e, "an indulgence of fantastic delight r[illegible] n yours. I have frequently endeavoured to [illegible] ity of a perfect government, by which all wrong should be restrained, all vice reformed, and all the subjects preserved in tranquillity and innocence. This thought produced innumerable schemes of reformation, and dictated many useful regulations and salutary edicts. This has been the sport, and sometimes the labour, of my solitude; and I start, when I think with how little anguish I once supposed the death of my father and my brothers."

"Such," says Imlac, "are the effects of visionary schemes: when we first form them we know them to be absurd, but familiarize them by degrees, and in time lose sight of their folly."

CHAP. XLV.

THEY DISCOURSE WITH AN OLD MAN.

THE evening was now far past, and they rose to return home. As they walked along the bank of the Nile, delighted with the beams of the moon quivering on the water, they saw at a small distance an old man whom the prince had often heard in the assembly of the sages. "Yonder," said he, "is one whose years have calmed his passions, but not clouded his reason; let us close the disquisitions of the night, by inquiring what are his sentiments of his own state, that we may know whether youth alone is to struggle with vexation, and whether any better hope remains for the latter part of life."

Here the sage approached and saluted them. They invited him to join their walk, and prattled awhile, as acquaintance that had unexpectedly met one another. The old man was cheerful and talkative, and the way seemed short in his company. He was pleased to find himself not disregarded, accompanied them to their house, and, at the prince's request, entered with them. They placed him in the seat of honour, and set wine and conserves before him.

"Sir," said the princess, "an evening walk must give to a man of learning, like you, pleasures which ignorance and youth can hardly conceive. You know the qualities and the causes of all that you behold, the laws by which the river flows, the periods in which the plants perform their revolutions. Every thing must supply you with contemplation, and renew the consciousness of your own dignity.

"Lady," answered he, "let the gay and the vigorous expect pleasure in their excursions; it is enough that age can obtain ease. To me the world has lost its novelty: I look round, and see what I remember to have seen in happier days. I rest against a tree, and consider that in the same shade I once disputed upon the annual overflow of the Nile with a friend who is now silent in the grave. I cast my eyes upwards, fix them on the changing moon, and think with pain on the vicissitudes of life. I have ceased to take much delight in physical truth; for what have I to do with those things which I am soon to leave."

"You may at least recreate yourself," said Imlac, "with the recollection of an honourable and useful life, and enjoy the praise which all agree to give you."

"Praise," said the sage with a sigh, "is to an old man an empty sound. I have neither mother to be delighted with the reputation of her son, nor wife to partake the honours of her husband. I have outlived my friends and my rivals. Nothing is now of much importance; for I cannot extend my interest beyond myself. Youth is delighted with applause, because it is considered as the earnest of some future good, and because the prospect of life is far extended: but to me, who am now declining to decrepitude, there is little to be feared from the malevolence of men, and yet less to be hoped from their affection and esteem. Something they may yet take away, but they can give nothing. Riches would now be useless, and high employment would be pain. My retrospect of life recalls to my view many opportunities of good neglected, much time squandered upon trifles, and more lost in idleness and vacancy. I leave many great designs unattempted, and many great attempts unfinished. My mind is

burdened with no heavy crime, and therefore I compose myself to tranquillity; endeavour to abstract my thoughts from hopes and cares, which though reason knows them to be vain, still try to keep their old possession of the heart: expect, with serene humility, that hour which nature cannot long delay; and hope to possess, in a better state, that happiness which here I could not find, and that virtue which here I have not attained."

He rose and w ing his audience not much elated with the The prince consoled himself with rema not reasonable to be disappointed by this had never been considered as the season o was possible to be easy in decline and we ely that the days of vigour and alacrity m t the noon of life might be bright if the ev .

The princes was querulous and malignant, and delig expectations of those who had newly entered the world. She had seen the possessors of estates look with envy on their heirs, and known many who enjoyed pleasure no longer than they can confine it to themselves.

Pekuah conjectured, that the man was older than he appeared, and was willing to impute his complaints to delirious dejection: or else supposed that he had been unfortunate, and was therefore discontented: "For nothing," said she, "is more common, than to call our own condition, the condition of life."

Imlac, who had no desire to see them depressed, smiled at the comforts, which they could so readily procure to themselves, and remembered, that at the same age, he was equally confident of unmingled prosperity, and equally fertile of consolatory expedients. He forbore to force upon them unwelcome knowledge, which time itself would too soon impress. The princess and her lady retired; the madness of the astronomer hung upon their minds, and they desired Imlac to enter upon his office, and delay next morning the rising of the sun.

CHAP. XLVI.

THE PRINCESS AND PEKUAH VISIT THE ASTRONOMER.

The princess and Pekuah having talked in private of Imlac's astronomer, thought his character at once so amiable and so strange, that they could not be satisfied without a nearer knowledge; and Imlac was requested to find the means of bringing them together.

This was somewhat difficult; the philosopher had never received any visits from women, though he lived in a city that had in it many Europeans who followed the manners of their own countries, and many from other parts of the world, that lived there with European liberty. The ladies would not be refused. and several schemes were proposed for the accomplishment of their design. It was proposed to introduce them as strangers in distress, to whom the sage was always accessible; but after some deliberation, it appeared, that by this artifice, no acquaintance could be formed, for their conversation would be short, and they could not decently importune him often. "This," said Rasselas, "is true; but I have yet a stronger objection against the misrepresentation of your state. I have always considered it as treason against the great republic of human nature, to make any man's virtues the means of deceiving him, whether on great or little occasions. All imposture weakens confidence, and chills benevolence. When the sage finds that you are not what you seemed, he will feel the resentment natural to a man, who, conscious of great abilities, discovers that he has been tricked by understandings meaner than his own, and, perhaps, the distrust, which he can never afterwards wholly lay aside, may stop the voice of counsel, and close the hand of charity; and where will you find the power of restoring his benefactions to mankind, or his peace to himself?"

To this no reply was attempted, and Imlac began to hope that their curiosity would subside; but, next day, Pekuah told him, she had now found an honest pretence for a visit to the astronomer, for she would solicit permission to continue under him the studies in which she had been initiated by the Arab, and the princess might go with her either as a fellow-student, or because a woman could not decently come alone.

"I am afraid," said Imlac, "that he will be soon weary of your company: men advanced far in knowledge do not love to repeat the elements of their art, and I am not certain that

even of the elements, as he will deliver them connected with inferences, and mingled with reflections, you are a very capable auditress." "That," said Pekuah, "must be my care: I ask of you only to take me thither. My knowledge is, perhaps, more than you imagine it, and by concurring always with his opinions, I shall make him think it greater than it is."

The astronomer [illegible] of this resolution, was told that a foreign la[illegible] search of knowledge, had heard of his re[illegible] desirous to become his scholar. The un[illegible] he proposal raised at once his surprise and [illegible]en, after a short deliberation, he consente[illegible] e could not stay without impatience till the [illegible]

s. The ladies d[illegible] agnificently, and were attended by Imla[illegible], who was pleased to see himself approached wi[illegible] pect by persons of so splendid an appearance. In the excnange of the first civilities he was timorous and bashful: but when the talk became regular, he recollected his powers, and justified the character which Imlac had given. Inquiring of Pekuah, what could have turned her inclination towards astronomy? he received from her a history of her adventure at the pyramid, and of the time passed at the Arab's island. She told her tale with ease and elegance, and her conversation took possession of his heart. The discourse was then turned to astronomy: Pekuah displayed what she knew: he looked upon her as a prodigy of genius, and entreated her not to desist from a study which she had so happily begun.

They came again and again, and were every time more welcome than before. The sage endeavoured to amuse them, that they might prolong their visits, for he found his thoughts grow brighter in their company; the clouds of solicitude vanished by degrees, as he forced himself to entertain them, and he grieved when he was left at their departure to his old employment of regulating the seasons.

The princess and her favourite had now watched his lips for several months, and could not catch a single word from which they could judge whether he continued, or not, in the opinion of his preternatural commission. They often contrived to bring him to an open declaration; but he easily eluded all their attacks, and on which side soever they pressed him, escaped from them to some other topic.

As their familiarity increased, they invited him often to the house of Imlac, where they distinguished him by extraordinary respect. He began gradually to delight in sublunary

pleasures. He came early, and departed late; laboured to recommend himself by assiduity and compliance; excited their curiosity after new arts, that they might still want his assistance; and when they made any excursion of pleasure or inquiry entreated to attend them.

By long experience of his integrity and wisdom, the prince and his sister were convinced that he might be trusted without danger; and lest he should draw any false hopes from the civilities which he received, discovered to him their condition, with the motives of their journey; and required his opinion on the choice of life.

"Of the various conditions which the world spreads before you, which you shall prefer," said the sage, "I am not able to instruct you, I can only tell that I have chosen wrong, I have passed my time in study without experience: in the attainment of sciences which can, for the most part, be but remotely useful to mankind. I have purchased knowledge at the expense of all the common comforts of life: I have missed the endearing elegance of female friendship, and the happy commerce of domestic tenderness. If I have obtained any prerogatives above other students, they have been accompanied with fear, disquiet, and scrupulosity: but even of these prerogatives, whatever they were, I have, since my thoughts have been diversified by more intercourse with the world, begun to question the reality. When I have been for a few days, lost in pleasing dissipation, I am always tempted to think that my inquiries have ended in error, and that I have suffered much, and suffered it in vain."

Imlac was delighted to find the sage's understanding was breaking through its mists, and resolved to detain him from the planets till he should forget his task of ruling them, and reason should recover its original influence.

From this time the astronomer was received into familiar friendship, and partook of all their projects and pleasures: his respect kept him attentive, and the activity of Rasselas did not leave much time unengaged. Something was always to be done; the day was spent in making observations which furnished talk for the evening, and the evening was closed with a scheme for the morrow.

The sage confessed to Imlac, that since he had mingled in the gay tumults of life, and divided his hours by a succession of amusements, he found the conviction of his authority over the skies fade gradually from his mind, and began to trust less to an opinion which he never could prove to others, and which he now found subject to variation, from causes in which reason had no part. "If I am accidentally left alone

for a few hours," said he, "my inveterate persuasion rushes upon my soul, and my thoughts are chained down by some irresistible violence; but they are soon disentangled by the prince's conversation, and instantaneously released at the entrance of Pekuah. I am like a man habitually afraid of spectres, who is set at ease by a lamp, and wonders at the dread which harassed him in the dark; yet, if his lamp be extinguished, fee[illegible]ors which he knows that when it is light [illegible]re. But I am sometimes afraid lest I ind[illegible] criminal negligence, and voluntarily forget [illegible] with which I am intrusted. If I favour [illegible] error, or am determined by my own ease [illegible]stion of this importance, how dreadful is m[illegible]

"No disease [illegible]" answered Imlac, "is so difficult of cure, [illegible]mplicated with the dread of guilt: fancy a[illegible] act interchangeably upon us, and so often shift their places, that the illusions of one are not distinguished from the dictates of the other. If fancy presents images not moral or religious, the mind drives them away when they give it pain, but when melancholic notions take the form of duty, they lay hold on the faculties without opposition, because we are afraid to exclude or banish them. For this reason the superstitious are often melancholy, and the melancholy almost always superstitious.

"But do not let the suggestions of timidity overpower your better reason: the danger of neglect can be but as the probability of the obligation, which when you consider it with freedom, you find very little, and that little growing every day less. Open your heart to the influence of the light, which from time to time breaks in upon you: when scruples importune you, which you in your lucid moments know to be vain, do not stand to parley, but fly to business or to Pekuah, and keep this thought always prevalent, that you are only one atom of the mass of humanity, and have neither such virtue nor vice, as that you should be singled out for supernatural favours or afflictions."

CHAP. XLVII.

THE PRINCE ENTERS, AND BRINGS A NEW TOPIC.

"All this," said the astronomer, "I have often thought, but my reason has been so long subjugated by an uncontrol-

able and overwhelming idea, that it durst not confide in its own decisions. I now see how fatally I betrayed my quiet, by suffering chimeras to play upon me in secret; but melancholy shrinks from communication, and I never found a man before, to whom I could impart my troubles, though I had been certain of relief. I rejoice to find my own sentiments confirmed by yours, who are not easily deceived, and can have no motive or purpose to deceive. I hope that time and variety will dissipate the gloom that has so long surrounded me, and the latter part of my days will be spent in peace."

"Your learning and virtue," said Imlac, "may justly give you hopes."

Rasselas then entered with the princess and Pekuah, and inquired, whether they had contrived any new diversion for the next day? "Such," said Nekayah, "is the state of life, that none are happy but by the anticipation of change: the change itself is nothing: when we have made it, the next wish is to change again. The world is not yet exhausted; let me see something to-morrow which I never saw before."

"Variety," said Rasselas, "is so necessary to content, that even the Happy Valley disgusted me by the recurrence of its luxuries; yet I could not forbear to reproach myself with impatience, when I saw the monks of St. Anthony support, without complaint, a life not of uniform delight, but uniform hardship."

"Those men," answered Imlac, "are less wretched in their silent convent than the Abyssinian princes in their prison of pleasure. Whatever is done by the monks is incited by an adequate and reasonable motive. Their labour supplies them with necessaries; it therefore cannot be omitted, and is certainly rewarded. Their devotion prepares them for another state, and reminds them of its approach, while it fits them for it. Their time is regularly distributed; one duty succeeds another, so that they are not left open to the distraction of unguided choice, nor lost in the shades of listless inactivity. There is a certain task to be performed at an appropriated hour; and their toils are cheerful, because they consider them as acts of piety, by which they are always advancing towards endless felicity."

"Do you think," said Nekayah, "that the monastic rule is a more holy and less imperfect state than any other? May not he equally hope for future happiness who converses openly with mankind, who succours the distressed by his charity, instructs the ignorant by his learning, and contributes by his industry to the general system of life; even though he should omit some of the mortifications which are practised in the

cloister, and allow himself such harmless delights as his condition may place within his reach?"

"This," said Imlac, "is a question which has long divided the wise, and perplexed the good. I am afraid to decide on either part. He that lives well in the world is better than he that lives well in a monastery. But, perhaps, every one is not able to stem the temptations of public life; and if he cannot conquer, he may properly retreat. Some have little power to do good, and have likewise little strength to resist evil. Many are weary of their conflicts with adversity, and are willing to eject those passions which have long busied them in vain. And many are dismissed by age and diseases from the more laborious duties of society. In monasteries the weak and timorous may be happily sheltered, the weary may repose, and the penitent may meditate. Those retreats of prayer and contemplation have something so congenial to the mind of man, that, perhaps, there is scarcely one that does not propose to close his life in pious abstraction with a few associates as serious as himself."

"Such," said Pekuah, "has often been my wish, and I have heard the princess declare, that she should not willingly die in a crowd."

"The liberty of using harmless pleasures," proceeded Imlac, "will not be disputed; but it is still to be examined what pleasures are harmless. The evil of any pleasure that Nekayah can image is not in the act itself, but in its consequences. Pleasure, in itself harmless, may become mischievous, by endearing to us a state which we know to be transient and probatory, and withdrawing our thoughts from that, of which every hour brings us nearer to the beginning, and of which no length of time will bring us to the end. Mortification is not virtuous in itself, nor has any other use, but that it disengages us from the allurements of sense. In the state of future perfection, to which we all aspire, there will be pleasure without danger, and security without restraint."

The princess was silent, and Rasselas, turning to the astronomer, asked him, whether he could not delay her retreat, by showing her something which she had not seen before.

"Your curiosity," said the sage, "has been so general, and your pursuit of knowledge so vigorous, that novelties are not now very easily to be found: but what you can no longer procure from the living may be given by the dead. Among the wonders of this country are the catacombs, or the ancient repositories, in which the bodies of the earliest gene-

rations were lodged, and where, by the virtue of the gums which embalmed them, they yet remain without corruption."

"I know not," said Rasselas, "what pleasure the sight of the catacombs can afford; but since nothing else is offered, I am resolved to view them, and shall place this with many other things which I have done, because I would do something."

They hired a guard of horsemen, and the next day visited the catacombs. When they were about to descend into the sepulchral caves, "Pekuah," said the princess, "we are now again invading the habitations of the dead; I know that you will stay behind: let me find you safe when I return." "No, I will not be left," answered Pekuah; "I will go down between you and the prince."

They then all descended, and roved with wonder through the labyrinth of subterraneous passages, where the bodies were laid in rows on either side.

CHAP. XLVIII.

IMLAC DISCOURSES ON THE NATURE OF THE SOUL.

"WHAT reason," said the prince, "can be given, why the Egyptians should thus expensively preserve those carcases which some nations consume with fire, others lay to mingle with the earth, and all agree to remove from their sight, as soon as decent rights can be performed?"

"The original of ancient customs," said Imlac, "is commonly unknown; for the practice often continues when the cause has ceased; and concerning superstitious ceremonies it is vain to conjecture; for what reason did not dictate, reason cannot explain. I have long believed that the practice of embalming arose only from tenderness to the remains of relations or friends, and to this opinion I am more inclined, because it seems impossible that this care should have been general: had all the dead been embalmed, their repositories must in time have been more spacious than the dwellings of the living. I suppose only the rich or honourable were secured from corruption, and the rest left to the course of nature.

"But it is commonly supposed that the Egyptians believed the soul to live as long as the body continued undissolved, and therefore tried this method of eluding death."

"Could the wise Egyptians," said Nekayah, "think so

grossly of the soul? If the soul could once survive its separation, what could it afterwards receive or suffer from the body?"

"The Egyptians would doubtless think erroneously," said the astronomer, "in the darkness of heathenism, and the first dawn of philosophy. The nature of the soul is still disputed amidst all our opportunities of clearer knowledge: some yet say, that it may be material, who, nevertheless, believe it to be immortal."

"Some," answered Imlac, "have indeed said that the soul is material, but I can scarcely believe that any man has thought it, who knew how to think; for all the conclusions of reason enforce the immateriality of mind, and all the notices of sense and investigations of science, concur to prove the unconsciousness of matter.

"It was never supposed that cogitation is inherent in matter, or that every particle is a thinking being. Yet, if any part of matter be devoid of thought, what part can we suppose to think? Matter can differ from matter only in form, density, bulk, motion, and direction of motion: to which of these, however varied or combined, can consciousness be annexed? To be round or square, to be solid or fluid, to be great or little, to be moved slowly or swiftly one way or another, are modes of material existence, all equally alien from the nature of cogitation. If matter be once without thought, it can only be made to think by some new modification, but all the modifications which it can admit are equally unconnected with cogitative powers."

"But the materialists," said the astronomer, "urge that matter may have qualities with which we are unacquainted."

"He who will determine," returned Imlac, "against that which he knows, because there may be something which he knows not; he that can set hypothetical possibility against acknowledged certainty, is not to be admitted among reasonable beings. All that we know of matter is, that matter is inert, senseless, and lifeless; and if this conviction cannot be opposed but by referring us to something that we know not, we have all the evidence that human intellect can admit. If that which is known may be overruled by that which is unknown, no being not omniscient, can arrive at certainty."

"Yet let us not," said the astronomer, "too arrogantly limit the Creator's power."

"It is no limitation of omnipotence," replied the poet, "to suppose that one thing is not consistent with another; that the same proposition cannot be at once true and false; that

the same number cannot be even and odd, that cogitation cannot be conferred on that which is created incapable of cogitation."

"I know not," said Nekayah, "any great use of this question. Does that immateriality, which, in my opinion, you have sufficiently proved, necessarily include eternal duration?"

"Of immateriality," said Imlac, "our ideas are negative, and therefore obscure. Immateriality seems to imply a natural power of perpetual duration, as a consequence of exemption from all causes of decay: whatever perishes is destroyed by the solution of its contexture, and separation of its parts; nor can we conceive how that which has no parts, and therefore admits no solution, can be naturally corrupted or impaired."

"I know not," said Rasselas, "how to conceive any thing without extension; what is extended must have parts, and you allow, that whatever has parts may be destroyed."

"Consider your own conceptions," replied Imlac, "and the difficulty will be less. You will find substance without extension. An ideal form is no less real than material bulk: yet an ideal form has no extension. It is no less certain, when you think on a pyramid, that your mind possesses the idea of a pyramid, than that the pyramid itself is standing. What space does the idea of a pyramid occupy more than the idea of a grain of corn? or how can either idea suffer laceration? As is the effect, such is the cause: as thought, such is the power that thinks; a power impassive and indiscerptible."

"But the Being," said Nekayah, "whom I fear to name, the Being which made the soul, can destroy it."

"He, surely, can destroy it," answered Imlac, "since however unperishable, it receives from a superior nature its power of duration. That it will not perish by any inherent cause of decay, or principle of corruption, may be shown by philosophy; but philosophy can tell no more. That it will not be annihilated by him that made it, we most humbly learn from higher authority."

The whole assembly stood awhile silent and collected. "Let us return," said Rasselas, "from this scene of mortality. How gloomy would be these mansions of the dead to him who did not know that he should never die; that what now acts shall continue its agency, and what now thinks shall think on forever. Those that lie here stretched before us, the wise and the powerful of ancient times, warn us to re-

member the shortness of our present state: they were, perhaps, snatched away while they were busy like us in the choice of life."

"To me," said the princess, "the choice of life is become less important; I hope hereafter to think only on the choice of eternity."

They then hastened out of the caverns, and, under the protection of their guard, returned to Cairo.

CHAP. XLIX.

THE CONCLUSION, IN WHICH NOTHING IS CONCLUDED.

It was now the time of the inundation of the Nile: a few days after their visit to the catacombs, the river began to rise.

They were confined to their house. The whole region being under water, gave them no invitation to any excursions, and, being well supplied with materials for talk, they diverted themselves with comparisons of the different forms of life which they had observed, and with various schemes of happiness, which each of them had formed.

Pekuah was never so much charmed with any place as the convent of St. Anthony, where the Arab restored her to the princess, and wished only to fill it with pious maidens, and to be made prioress of the order; she was weary of expectation and disgust, and would gladly be fixed in some unvariable state.

The princess thought, that of all sublunary things knowledge was the best: she desired first to learn all sciences, and then purposed to found a college of learned women, in which she would preside, that, by conversing with the old, and educating the young, she might divide her time between the acquisition and communication of wisdom, and raise up for the next age models of prudence, and patterns of piety.

The prince desired a little kingdom, in which he might administer justice in his own person, and see all the parts of government with his own eyes; but he could never fix the limits of his dominions, and was always adding to the number of his subjects.

Imlac and the astronomer were contented to be driven along

am of life, without directing their course to any parti-
ort.
hese wishes that they had formed, they well knew that
ould be obtained. They deliberated awhile what was
lone, and resolved, when the inundation should cease,
rn to Abyssinia.

THE

RAMBLER.

No. 1. Tuesday, March 20, 1749–50.

Cur tamen hoc libeat potius decurrere campo,
Per quem magnus equos Auruncæ flexit alumnus,
Si vacat, et placidi rationem admittitis, edam. Juv.

Why to expatiate in this beaten field,
Why arms, oft us'd in vain, I mean to wield;
If time permit, and candour will attend,
Some satisfaction this essay may lend. Elphinston.

The difficulty of the first address on any new occasion, is felt by every man in his transactions with the world, and confessed by the settled and regular forms of salutation which necessity has introduced into all languages. Judgment was wearied with the perplexity of being forced upon choice, where there was no motive to preference; and it was found convenient that some easy method of introduction should be established, which, if it wanted the allurement of novelty, might enjoy the security of prescription.

Perhaps few authors have presented themselves before the public, without wishing that such ceremonial modes of entrance had been anciently established, as might have freed them from those dangers which the desire of pleasing is certain to produce, and precluded the vain expedients of softening censure by apologies, or rousing attention by abruptness.

The epic writers have found the proemial part of the poem such an addition to their undertaking, that they have a unanimously adopted the first lines of Homer, and the needs only be informed of the subject, to know in manner the poem will begin.

But this solemn repetition is hitherto the peculiar distinction of heroic poetry; it has never been legally extended to

the lower orders of literature, but seems to be considered as an hereditary privilege, to be enjoyed only by those who claim it from their alliance to the genius of Homer.

The rules which the injudicious use of this prerogative suggested to Horace, may indeed be applied to the direction of candidates for inferior fame; it may be proper for all to remember, that they ought not to raise expectation which it is not in their power to satisfy, and that it is more pleasing to see smoke brightening into flame, than flame sinking into smoke.

This precept has been long received, both from regard to the authority of Horace, and its conformity to the general opinion of the world; yet there have been always some, that thought it no deviation from modesty to recommend their own labours, and imagined themselves entitled by indisputable merit to an exemption from general restraints, and to elevations not allowed in common life. They, perhaps, believed, that when, like Thucydides, they bequeathed to mankind κτῆμα ἐς ἀεί, *an estate for ever*, it was an additional favour to inform them of its value.

It may, indeed, be no less dangerous to claim, on certain occasions, too little than too much. There is something captivating in spirit and intrepidity, to which we often yield, as to resistless power; nor can he reasonably expect the confidence of others, who too apparently distrusts himself.

Plutarch, in his enumeration of the various occasions on which a man may without just offence proclaim his own excellencies, has omitted the case of an author entering the world; unless it may be comprehended under this general position, that a man may lawfully praise himself for those qualities which cannot be known but from his own mouth; as when he is among strangers, and can have no opportunity of an actual exertion of his powers. That the case of an author is parallel will scarcely be granted, because he necessarily discovers the degree of his merit to the judges, when he appears at his trial. But it should be remembered, that unless his judges are inclined to favour him, they will hardly be persuaded to hear the cause.

In love, the state which fills the heart with a degree of solicitude next that of an author, it has been held a maxim, that success is most easily obtained by indirect and unperceived approaches; he who too soon professes himself a lover, raises obstacles to his own wishes, and those whom disappointments have taught experience, endeavour to conceal their passion till they believe their mistress wishes for their discovery. The same method, if it were practicable to writers,

would save many complaints of the severity of the age, and the caprices of criticism. If a man could glide imperceptibly into the favour of the public, and only proclaim his pretensions to literary honours when he is sure of not being rejected, he might commence author with better hopes, as his failings might escape contempt, though he shall never attain much regard.

But since the world supposes every man that writes ambitious of applause, as some ladies have taught themselves to believe that every man intends love who expresses civility, the miscarriage of any endeavour in learning raises an unbounded contempt, indulged by most minds without scruple, as an honest triumph over unjust claims, and exorbitant expectations. The artifices of those who put themselves in this hazardous state, have therefore been multiplied in proportion to their fear as well as their ambition; and are to be looked upon with more indulgence, as they are incited at once by the two great movers of the human mind, the desire of good and the fear of evil. For who can wonder that, allured on one side, and frightened on the other, some should endeavour to gain favour by bringing the judge with an appearance of respect which they do not feel, to excite compassion by confessing weakness of which they are not convinced; and others to attract regard by a show of openness, and magnanimity, by a daring profession of their own deserts, and a public challenge of honours and rewards?

The ostentatious and haughty display of themselves has been the usual refuge of diurnal writers; in vindication of whose practice it may be said, that what it wants in prudence is supplied by sincerity, and who at least may plead, that if their boasts deceive any into the perusal of their performances, they defraud them of but little time.

Quid enim? Concurritur—horæ
Momento cita mors venit, aut victoria læta.

The battle join, and in a moment's flight,
Death, or a joyful conquest, ends the fight. FRANCIS.

The question concerning the merit of the day is soon decided, and we are not condemned to toil through half a folio to be convinced that the writer has broke his promise.

It is one among many reasons for which I purpose to endeavour the entertainment of my countrymen by a short essay on Tuesday and Saturday, that I hope not much to tire those whom I shall not happen to please; and if I am not commended for the beauty of my works, to be at least pardoned

for their brevity. But whether my expectations are most fixed on pardon or praise, I think it not necessary to discover; for having accurately weighed the reasons for arrogance and submission, I find them so nearly equiponderant, that my impatience to try the event of my first performance will not suffer me to attend any longer the trepidations of the balance.

There are, indeed, many conveniences almost peculiar to this method of publication, which may naturally flatter the author, whether he be confident or timorous. The man to whom the extent of his knowledge, or the sprightliness of his imagination, has, in his own opinion, already secured the praises of the world, willingly takes that way of displaying his abilities which will soonest give him an opportunity of hearing the voice of fame; it heightens his alacrity to think in how many places he shall hear what he is now writing, read with ecstacies to-morrow. He will often please himself with reflecting, that the author of a large treatise must proceed with anxiety, lest, before the completion of his work, the attention of the public may have changed its object; but that he who is confined to no single topic, may follow the national taste through all its variations, and catch the *aura popularis*, the gale of favour, from what point soever it shall blow.

Nor is the prospect less likely to ease the doubts of the cautious, and the terrors of the fearful, for to such the shortness of every single paper is a powerful encouragement. He that questions his abilities to arrange the dissimilar parts of an extensive plan, or fears to be lost in a complicated system, may yet hope to adjust a few pages without perplexity; and if, when he turns over the repositories of his memory, he finds his collection too small for a volume, he may yet have enough to furnish out an essay. He that would fear to lay out too much time upon an experiment of which he knows not the event, persuades himself that a few days will show him what he is to expect from his learning and his genius. If he thinks his own judgment not sufficiently enlightened, he may, by attending to the remarks which every paper will produce, rectify his opinions. If he should with too little premeditation encumber himself by an unwieldy subject, he can quit it without confessing his ignorance, and pass to other topics less dangerous, or more tractable. And if he finds, with all his industry, and all his artifices, that he cannot deserve regard, or cannot attain it, he may let the design fall at once, and, without injury to others or himself, retire to amusements of greater pleasure, or to studies of better prospect.

No. 2. Saturday, March 24, 1749–50.

Stare loco nescit, pereunt vestigia mille
Ante fugam, absentemque ferit gravis ungula campum. Statius.

Th' impatient courser pants in every vein,
And pawing seems to beat the distant plain;
Hills, vales, and floods appear already crost,
And ere he starts, a thousand steps are lost. Pope.

That the mind of man is never satisfied with the objects immediately before it, but is always breaking away from the present moment, and losing itself in schemes of future felicity; and that we forget the proper use of the time now in our power, to provide for the enjoyment of that which, perhaps, may never be granted us, has been frequently remarked; and as this practice is a commodious subject of raillery to the gay, and of declamation to the serious, it has been ridiculed with all the pleasantry of wit, and exuggerated with all the amplifications of rhetoric. Every instance, by which its absurdity might appear most flagrant, has been studiously collected; it has been marked with every epithet of contempt, and all the tropes and figures have been called forth against it.

Censure is willingly indulged, because it always implies some superiority; men please themselves with imagining that they have made a deeper search, or wider survey, than others, and detected faults and follies, which escape vulgar observation. And the pleasure of wantoning in common topics is so tempting to a writer, that he cannot easily resign it; a train of sentiments generally received enables him to shine without labour, and to conquer without a contest. It is so easy to laugh at the folly of him who lives only in idea, refuses immediate ease for distant pleasures, and, instead of enjoying the blessings of life, lets life glide away in preparations to enjoy them: it affords such opportunities of triumphant exultation, to exemplify the uncertainty of the human state, to rouse mortals from their dream, and inform them of the silent celerity of time, that we may believe authors willing rather to transmit than examine so advantageous a principle, and more inclined to pursue a track so smooth and so flowery, than attentively to consider whether it leads to truth.

This quality of looking forward into futurity, seems the unavoidable condition of a being, whose motions are gradual, and whose life is progressive: as his powers are limited, he

must use means for the attainment of his ends, and intend first what he performs last; as by continual advances from his first stage of existence, he is perpetually varying the horizon of his prospects, he must always discover new motives of action, new excitements of fear, and allurements of desire.

The end therefore which at present calls forth our efforts, will be found, when it is once gained, to be only one of the means to some remoter end. The natural flights of the human mind are not from pleasure to pleasure, but from hope to hope.

He that directs his steps to a certain point, must frequently turn his eyes to that place which he strives to reach; he that undergoes the fatigue of labour must solace his weariness with the contemplation of its reward. In agriculture, one of the most simple and necessary employments, no man turns up the ground but because he thinks of the harvest, that harvest which blights may intercept, which inundations may sweep away, or which death or calamity may hinder him from reaping.

Yet as few maxims are widely received or long retained but for some conformity with truth and nature, it must be confessed, that this caution against keeping our view too intent upon remote advantages is not without its propriety or usefulness, though it may have been recited with too much levity, or enforced with too little distinction: for not to speak of that vehemence of desire which presses through right and wrong to its gratification, or that anxious inquietude which is justly chargeable with distrust of heaven, subjects too solemn for my present purpose; it frequently happens that, by indulging early the raptures of success, we forget the measures necessary to secure it, and suffer the imagination to riot in the fruition of some possible good, till the time of obtaining it has slipped away.

There would, however, be few enterprises of great labour or hazard undertaken, if we had not the power of magnifying the advantages which we persuade ourselves to expect from them. When the knight of La Mancha gravely recounts to his companion the adventures by which he is to signalize himself in such a manner, that he shall be summoned to the support of empires, solicitude to accept the heiress of the crown which he has preserved, have honours and riches to scatter about him, and an island to bestow on his worthy 'squire, very few readers, amidst their mirth or pity, can deny that they have admitted visions of the same kind; though they have not, perhaps, expected events equally

strange, or by means equally inadequate. When we pity him, we reflect on our own disappointments; and when we laugh, our hearts inform us that he is not more ridiculous than ourselves, except that he tells what we have only thought.

The understanding of a man naturally sanguine, may, indeed, be easily vitiated by the luxurious indulgence of hope, however necessary to the production of every thing great or excellent, as some plants are destroyed by too open exposure to that sun which gives life and beauty to the vegetable world.

Perhaps no class of the human species requires more to be cautioned against this anticipation of happiness, than those that aspire to the name of authors. A man of lively fancy no sooner finds a hint moving in his mind, than he makes momentaneous excursions to the press, and to the world, and with a little encouragement from flattery, pushes forward into future ages, and prognosticates the honours to be paid him, when envy is extinct, and faction forgotten, and those whom partiality now suffers to obscure him, shall have given way to the triflers of as short duration as themselves.

Those who have proceeded so far as to appeal to the tribunal of succeeding times, are not likely to be cured of their infatuation; but all endeavours ought to be used for the prevention of a disease, for which, when it has attained its height, perhaps no remedy will be found in the gardens of philosophy, however she may boast her physic of the mind, her cathartics of vice, or lenitives of passion.

I shall, therefore, while I am yet but lightly touched with the writer's malady, endeavour to fortify myself against the infection, not without some weak hope that my preservatives may extend their virtues to others, whose employment exposes them to the same danger.

Laudis amore tumes? Sunt certa piacula, quæ te
Ter pure lecto poterunt recreare libello.

Is fame your passion? Wisdom's powerful charm,
If thrice read over, shall its force disarm. FRANCIS.

It is the sage advice of Epictetus, that a man should accustom himself often to think of what is most shocking and terrible, that by such reflections he may be preserved from too ardent wishes for seeming good, and from too much dejection in real evil.

There is nothing more dreadful to an author than neglect; compared with which, reproach, hatred, and opposition, are names of happiness; yet this worse, this meanest fate, every one who dares to write has reason to fear.

I nunc, et versus tecum meditare canoros.

Go now, and meditate thy tuneful lays. ELPHINSTON.

It may not be unfit for him who makes a new entrance into the lettered world, so far to suspect his own powers, as to believe that he possibly may deserve neglect; that nature may not have qualified him much to enlarge or embellish knowledge, nor sent him forth entitled by indisputable superiority to regulate the conduct of the rest of mankind; that, though the world must be granted to be yet in ignorance, he is not destined to dispel the cloud, nor to shine out as one of the luminaries of life. For this suspicion, every catalogue of a library will furnish sufficient reason; as he will find it crowded with names of men, who, though now forgotten, were once no less enterprising or confident than himself, equally pleased with their own productions, equally caressed by their patrons, and flattered by their friends.

But though it should happen that an author is capable of excelling, yet his merit may pass without notice, huddled in the variety of things, and thrown into the general miscellany of life. He that endeavours after fame by writing, solicits the regard of a multitude fluctuating in pleasures or immersed in business, without time for intellectual amusements; he appeals to judges, prepossessed by passions, or corrupted by prejudices, which preclude their approbation of any new performance. Some are too indolent to read any thing, till its reputation is established; others too envious to promote that fame which gives them pain by its increase. What is new is opposed, because most are unwilling to be taught; and what is known is rejected, because it is not sufficiently considered, that men more frequently require to be reminded than informed. The learned are afraid to declare their opinion early, lest they should put their reputation in hazard; the ignorant always imagine themselves giving some proof of delicacy, when they refuse to be pleased; and he that finds his way to reputation through all these obstructions, must acknowledge that he is indebted to other causes besides his industry, his learning, or his wit.

No. 3. Tuesday, March 27, 1750.

Virtus, *repulsæ nescia sordidæ,*
Intaminatis fulget honoribus,
Nec sumit aut ponit secures
Arbitrio popularis auræ. Hor.

Undisappointed in designs,
With native honours virtue shines;
Nor takes up pow'r, nor lays it down,
As giddy rabbles smile or frown. Elphinston.

The task of an author is, either to teach what is not known, or to recommend known truths by his manner of adorning them; either to let new light in upon the mind, and open new scenes to the prospect, or to vary the dress and situation of common objects, so as to give them fresh grace and more powerful attractions, to spread such flowers over the regions through which the intellect has already made its progress, as may tempt it to return, and take a second view of things hastily passed over, or negligently regarded.

Either of these labours is very difficult, because that they may not be fruitless, men must not only be persuaded of their errors, but reconciled to their guide; they must not only confess their ignorance, but, what is still less pleasing, must allow that he from whom they are to learn is more knowing than themselves.

It might be imagined, that such an employment was in itself sufficiently irksome and hazardous; that none would be found so malevolent as wantonly to add weight to the stone of Sysiphus; and that few endeavours would be used to obstruct those advances to reputation, which must be made at such an expense of time and thought, with so great hazard in the miscarriage, and with so little advantage from the success.

Yet there is a certain race of men, that either imagine it their duty, or make it their amusement, to hinder the reception of every work of learning or genius, who stand as sentinels in the avenues of fame, and value themselves upon giving *Ignorance* and *Envy* the first notice of a prey.

To these men, who distinguish themselves by the appellation of *Critics*, it is necessary for a new author to find some means of recommendation. It is probable, that the most malignant of these persecutors might be somewhat softened, and prevailed on, for a short time, to remit their fury. Having for this purpose considered many expedients, I find in the

records of ancient times, that Argus was lulled by music, and Cerberus quieted with a sop; and am, therefore, inclined to believe that modern critics, who if they have not the eyes, have the watchfulness of Argus, and can bark as loud as Cerberus, though, perhaps, they cannot bite with equal force, might be subdued by methods of the same kind. I have heard how some have been pacified with claret and a supper, and others laid asleep with the soft notes of flattery.

Though the nature of my undertaking gives me sufficient reason to dread the united attacks of this virulent generation, yet I have not hitherto persuaded myself to take any measures for flight or treaty. For I am in doubt whether they can act against me by lawful authority, and suspect that they have presumed upon a forged commission, styled themselves the ministers of *Criticism*, without any authentic evidence of delegation, and uttered their own determinations as the decrees of a higher judicature.

Criticism, from whom they derieve their claim to decide the fate of writers, was the eldest daughter of *Labour*, and *Truth*: she was, at her birth, committed to the care of *Justice*, and brought up by her in the palace of *Wisdom*. Being soon distinguished by the celestials for her uncommon qualities, she was appointed the governess of *Fancy*, and empowered to beat time to the chorus of the *Muses*, when they sung before the throne of *Jupiter*.

When the *Muses* condescended to visit this lower world, they came accompanied by *Criticism*, to whom, upon her descent from her native regions, *Justice* gave a sceptre, to be carried aloft in her right hand, one end of which was tinctured with ambrosia, and inwreathed with a golden foilage of amaranths and bays; the other end was encircled with cypress and poppies, and dipped in the waters of oblivion. In her left hand she bore an unextinguishable torch, manufactured by *Labour*, and lighted by *Truth*, of which it was the particular quality immediately to show every thing in its true form, however it might be disguised to common eyes. Whatever *Art* could complicate, or *Folly* could confound, was, upon the first gleam of the torch of *Truth*, exhibited in its distinct parts and original simplicity; it darted through the labyrinths of sophistry, and showed at once all the absurdities to which they served for refuge; it pierced through the robes which rhetoric often sold to falsehood, and detected the disproportion of parts which artificial veils had been contrived to cover.

Thus furnished for the execution of her office, *Criticism* came down to survey the performances of those who professed

themselves the votaries of the *Muses*. Whatever was brought before her, she beheld by the steady light of the torch of *Truth*, and when her examination had convinced her, that the laws of just writing had been observed, she touched it with the amaranthine end of the sceptre, and consigned it over to immortality.

But it more frequently happened, that in the works which required her inspection, there was some imposture attempted; that false colors were laboriously laid; that some secret inequality was found between the words and sentiments, or some dissimilitude of the ideas and the original objects; that incongruities were linked together, or that some parts were of no use but to enlarge the appearance of the whole, without contributing to its beauty, solidity, or usefulness.

Wherever such discoveries were made, and they were made whenever those faults were committed, *Criticism* refused the touch which conferred the sanction of immortality, and, when the errors were frequent and gross, reversed the sceptre, and let drops of lethe distil from the poppies and cypress a fatal mildew, which immediately began to waste the work away, till it was at last totally destroyed.

There were some compositions brought to the test, in which, when the strongest light was thrown upon them, their beauties and faults appeared so equally mingled that *Criticism* stood with her sceptre poised in her hand, in doubt whether to shed lethe, or ambrosia, upon them. These at last increased to so great a number, that she was weary of attending such doubtful claims, and, for fear of using improperly the sceptre of *Justice*, referred the cause to be considered by *Time*.

The proceedings of *Time*, though very dilatory, were, some few caprices excepted, conformable to justice: and many who thought themselves secure by a short forbearance, have sunk under his scythe, as they were posting down with their volumes in triumph to futurity. It was observable that some were destroyed by little and little, and others crushed for ever by a single blow.

Criticism having long kept her eye fixed steadily upon *Time*, was at last so well satisfied with his conduct, that she withdrew from the earth with her patroness *Astrea*, and left *Prejudice* and *False Taste* to ravage at large as the associates of *Fraud* and *Mischief*; contenting herself thenceforth to shed her influence from afar upon some select Minds, fitted for its reception by learning and by virtue.

Before her departure she broke her sceptre, of which the shivers, that formed the ambrosial end, were caught up by *Flattery*, and those that had been infected with the waters of *lethe*, were with equal haste seized by *Malevolence*. The fol-

lowers of *Flattery*, to whom she distributed her part of the sceptre, neither had nor desired light, but touched indiscriminately whatever *Power* or *Interest* happened to exhibit. The companions of *Malevolence* were supplied by the *Furies* with a torch, which had this quality peculiar to infernal lustre, that its light fell only upon faults.

> No light, but rather darkness visible,
> Serv'd only to discover sights of wo.

With these fragments of authority, the slaves of *Flattery* and *Malevolence* marched out, at the command of their mistresses, to confer immortality, or condemn to oblivion. But this sceptre had now lost its power; and *Time* passes his sentence at leisure, without any regard to their determinations.

No. 4. Saturday, March 31, 1750.

Simul et jucunda et idonea dicere vitæ. Hor.

And join both profit and delight in one. Creech.

The works of fiction with which the present generation seems more particularly delighted, are such as exhibit life in its true state, diversified only by accidents that daily happen in the world, and influenced by passions and qualities which are really to be found in conversing with mankind.

This kind of writing may be termed not improperly the comedy of romance, and is to be conducted nearly by the rules of comic poetry. Its province is to bring about natural events by easy means, and to keep up curiosity without the help of wonder: it is therefore precluded from the machines and expedients of the heroic romance, and can neither employ giants to snatch away a lady from the nuptial rites, nor knights to bring her back from captivity; it can neither bewilder its personages in deserts, nor lodge them in imaginary castles.

I remember a remark made by Scaliger upon Pontanus, that all his writings are filled with the same images; and that if you take from him his lilies and his roses, his satyrs and his dryads, he will have nothing left that can be called poetry. In like manner, almost all the fictions of the last

age will vanish, if you deprive them of a hermit and a wood, a battle and a shipwreck.

Why this wild strain of imagination found reception so long in polite and learned ages, it is not easy to conceive; but we cannot wonder that while readers could be procured, the authors were willing to continue it; for when a man had by practice gained some fluency of language, he had no further care than to retire to his closet, let loose his invention, and heat his mind with incredibilities; a book was thus produced without fear of criticism, without the toil of study, without knowledge of nature, or acquaintance with life.

The task of our present writers is very different; it requires, together with that learning which is to be gained from books, that experience which can never be attained by solitary diligence, but must arise from general converse and accurate observation of the living world. Their performances have, as Horace expresses it, *plus oneris quantum veniæ minus*, little indulgence, and therefore more difficulty. They are engaged in portraits of which every one knows the original, and can detect any deviation from exactness of resemblance. Other writings are safe, except from the malice of learning, but these are in danger from every common reader: as the slipper ill executed was censured by a shoemaker who happened to stop in his way at the Venus of Apelles.

But the fear of not being approved as just copiers of human manners, is not the most important concern that an author of this sort ought to have before him. These books are written chiefly to the young, the ignorant, and the idle, to whom they serve as lectures of conduct, and introductions into life. They are the entertainment of minds unfurnished with ideas, and therefore easily susceptible of impressions; not fixed by principles, and therefore easily following the current of fancy; not informed by experience, and consequently open to every false suggestion and partial account.

That the highest degree of reverence should be paid to youth, and that nothing indecent should be suffered to approach their eyes or ears, are precepts extorted by sense and virtue from an ancient writer, by no means eminent for chastity of thought. The same kind, though not the same degree of caution, is required in every thing which is laid before them, to secure them from unjust prejudices, perverse opinions, and incongruous combinations of images.

In the romances formerly written, every transaction and sentiment was so remote from all that passes among men, that the reader was in very little danger of making any applications to himself; the virtues and crimes were equally

beyond his sphere of activity; and he amused himself with heroes and with traitors, deliverers and persecutors, as with beings of another species, whose actions were regulated upon motives of their own, and who had neither faults nor excellencies in common with himself.

But when an adventurer is levelled with the rest of the world, and acts in such scenes of the universal drama, as may be the lot of any other man; young spectators fix their eyes upon him with closer attention, and hope, by observing his behaviour and success, to regulate their own practices, when they shall be engaged in the like part.

For this reason, these familiar histories may perhaps be made of greater use than the solemnities of professed morality, and convey the knowledge of vice and virtue with more efficacy than axioms and definitions. But if the power of example is so great as to take possession of the memory by a kind of violence, and produce effects almost without the intervention of the will, care ought to be taken, that, when the choice is unrestrained, the best examples only should be exhibited; and that which is likely to operate so strongly, should not be mischievous or uncertain in its effects.

The chief advantage which these fictions have over real life is, that their authors are at liberty, though not to invent, yet to select objects, and to cull from the mass of mankind, those individuals upon which the attention ought most to be employed: as a diamond, though it cannot be made, may be polished by art, and placed in such a situation, as to display that lustre which before was buried among common stones.

It is justly considered as the greatest excellency of art, to imitate nature; but it is necessary to distinguish those parts of nature, which are most proper for imitation: greater care is still required in representing life, which is so often discoloured by passion, or deformed by wickedness. If the world be promiscuously described, I cannot see of what use it can be to read the account: or why it may not be as safe to turn the eye immediately upon mankind as upon a mirror, which shows all that presents itself without discrimination.

It is therefore not a sufficient vindication of a character, that it is drawn as it appears; for many characters ought never to be drawn: nor of a narrative, that the train of events is agreeable to observation and experience; for that observation which is called knowledge of the world, will be found much more frequently to make men cunning than good. The purpose of these writings is surely not only to show mankind, but to provide that they may be seen hereafter with less hazard; to teach the means of avoiding the snares which are

laid by *Treachery* for *Innocence*, without infusing any wish for that superiority with which the betrayer flatters his vanity; to give the power of counteracting fraud, without the temptation to practise it; to initiate youth by mock encounters in the art of necessary defence, and to increase prudence without impairing virtue.

Many writers, for the sake of following nature, so mingle good and bad qualities in their principal personages, that they are both equally conspicuous; and as we accompany them through their adventures with delight, and are led by degrees to interest ourselves in their favour, we lose the abhorrence of their faults, because they do not hinder our pleasure, or, perhaps, regard them with some kindness, for being united with so much merit.

There have been men indeed splendidly wicked, whose endowments threw a brightness on their crimes, and whom scarce any villany made perfectly detestable, because they never could be wholly divested of their excellencies; but such have been in all ages the great corruptors of the world, and their resemblance ought no more to be preserved, than the art of murdering without pain.

Some have advanced, without due attention to the consequences of this notion, that certain virtues have their correspondent faults, and therefore that to exhibit either apart is to deviate from probability. Thus men are observed by Swift to be "grateful in the same degree as they are resentful." This principle, with others of the same kind, supposes man to act from a brute impulse, and pursue a certain degree of inclination, without any choice of the object; for, otherwise, though it should be allowed that gratitude and resentment arise from the same constitution of the passions, it follows not that they will be equally indulged when reason is consulted; yet, unless that consequence be admitted, this sagacious maxim becomes an empty sound, without any relation to practice or to life.

Nor is it evident, that even the first motions to these effects are always in the same proportion. For pride, which produces quickness of resentment, will obstruct gratitude, by unwillingness to admit that inferiority which obligation implies; and it is very unlikely that he who cannot think he receives a favour, will acknowledge or repay it.

It is of the utmost importance to mankind, that positions of this tendency should be laid open and confuted; for while men consider good and evil as springing from the same root, they will spare the one for the sake of the other, and in judging, if not of others, at least of themselves, will be apt to estimate

their virtues by their vices. To this fatal error all those will contribute, who confound the colours of right and wrong, and, instead of helping to settle their boundaries, mix them with so much art, that no common mind is able to disunite them.

In narratives where historical veracity has no place, I cannot discover why there should not be exhibited the most perfect idea of virtue; of virtue not angelical, nor above probability, for what we cannot credit, we shall never imitate, but the highest and purest that humanity can reach, which, exercised in such trials as the various revolutions of things shall bring upon it, may, by conquering some calamities, and enduring others, teach us what we may hope, and what we can perform. Vice, for vice is necessary to be shown, should always disgust; nor should the graces of gaiety, or the dignity of courage, be so united with it, as to reconcile it to the mind. Wherever it appears, it should raise hatred by the malignity of its practices, and contempt by the meanness of its stratagems: for while it is supported by either parts or spirit, it will be seldom heartily abhorred. The Roman tyrant was content to be hated, if he was but feared; and there are thousands of the readers of romances willing to be thought wicked, if they may be allowed to be wits. It is therefore to be steadily inculcated, that virtue is the highest proof of understanding, and the only solid basis of greatness; and that vice is the natural consequence of narrow thoughts; that it begins in mistake, and ends in ignominy.*

No. 5. Tuesday, April 3, 1750.

Et nunc omnis ager, nunc omnis parturit arbos,
Nunc frondent sylvæ, nunc formosissimus annus. Virg.

Now ev'ry field, now ev'ry tree is green;
Now genial Nature's fairest face is seen. Elphinston

Every man is sufficiently discontented with some circumstances of his present state, to suffer his imagination to range more or less in quest of future happiness, and to fix upon some point of time, in which, by the removal of the inconvenience which now perplexes him, or acquisition of the advantage

* This excellent paper was occasioned by the popularity of Roderick Random, and Tom Jones, which appeared about this time, and have been the models of that species of romance, now known by the more common name of *Novel*. C.

which he at present wants, he shall find the condition of his life very much improved.

When this time, which is too often expected with great impatience, at last arrives, it generally comes without the blessing for which it was desired; but we solace ourselves with some new prospect, and press forward again with equal eagerness.

It is lucky for a man, in whom this temper prevails, when he turns his hopes upon things wholly out of his own power; since he forbears then to precipitate his affairs, for the sake of the great event that is to complete his felicity, and waits for the blissful hour with less neglect of the measures necessary to be taken in the mean time.

I have long known a person of this temper, who indulged his dream of happiness with less hurt to himself than such chimerical wishes commonly produced, and adjusted his scheme with such address, that his hopes were in full bloom three parts of the year, and in the other part never wholly blasted. Many, perhaps, would be desirous of learning by what means he procured to himself such a cheap and lasting satisfaction. It was gained by a constant practice of referring the removal of all his uneasiness to the coming of the next spring; if his health was impaired, the spring would restore it; if what he wanted was at a high price, it would fall its value in the spring.

The spring indeed did often come without any of these effects, but he was always certain that the next would be more propitious; nor was ever convinced, that the present spring would fail him before the middle of summer; for he always talked of the spring as coming till it was past, and when it was once past, every one agreed with him that it was coming.

By long converse with this man, I am, perhaps, brought to feel immoderate pleasure in the contemplation of this delightful season; but I have the satisfaction of finding many, whom it can be no shame to resemble, infected with the same enthusiasm; for there is, I believe, scarce any poet of eminence, who has not left some testimony of his fondness for the flowers, the zephyrs, and the warblers of the spring. Nor has the most luxuriant imagination been able to describe the serenity and happiness of the golden age, otherwise than by giving a perpetual spring, as the highest reward of uncorrupted innocence.

There is, indeed, something inexpressibly pleasing in the annual renovation of the world, and the new display of the treasures of nature. The cold and darkness of winter, with the naked deformity of every object on which we turn our eyes, make us rejoice at the succeeding season, as well for what

we have escaped as for what we may enjoy; and every budding flower, which a warm situation brings early to our view, is considered by us as a messenger to notify the approach of more joyous days.

The Spring affords to a mind, so free from the disturbance of cares or passions as to be vacant to calm amusements, almost every thing that our present state makes us capable of enjoying. The variegated verdure of the fields and woods, the succession of grateful odours, the voice of pleasure pouring out its notes on every side, with the gladness apparently conceived by every animal, from the growth of his food, and the clemency of the weather, throw over the whole earth an air of gaiety, significantly expressed by the smile of nature.

Yet there are men to whom these scenes are able to give no delight, and who hurry away from all the varieties of rural beauty, to lose their hours and divert their thoughts by cards or assemblies, a tavern dinner, or the prattle of the day.

It may be laid down as a position which will seldom deceive, that when a man cannot bear his own company, there is something wrong. He must fly from himself, either because he feels a tediousness in life from the equipoise of an empty mind, which, having no tendency to one motion more than another, but as it is impelled by some external power, must always have recourse to foreign objects; or he must be afraid of the intrusion of some unpleasing ideas, and perhaps is struggling to escape from the remembrance of a loss, the fear of a calamity, or some other thought of greater horror.

Those whom sorrow incapacitates to enjoy the pleasures of contemplation, may properly apply to such diversions, provided they are innocent, as lay strong hold on the attention; and those, whom fear of any future affliction chains down to misery, must endeavour to obviate the danger.

My considerations shall, on this occasion, be turned on such as are burdensome to themselves, merely because they want subjects for reflection, and to whom the volume of nature is thrown open without affording them pleasure or instruction, because they never learned to read the characters.

A French author has advanced this seeming paradox, that *very few men know how to take a walk;* and, indeed, it is true, that few know how to take a walk with a prospect of any other pleasure, than the same company would have afforded them at home.

There are animals that borrow their colour from the neighbouring body, and consequently vary their hue as they happen

to change their place. In like manner, it ought to be the endeavour of every man to derive his reflections from the objects about him; for it is to no purpose that he alters his position, if his attention continues fixed to the same point. The mind should be kept open to the access of every new idea, and so far disengaged from the predominance of particular thoughts, as easily to accommodate itself to occasional entertainment.

A man that has formed this habit of turning every new object to his entertainment, finds in the productions of nature an inexhaustible stock of materials upon which he can employ himself, without any temptations to envy or malevolence; faults, perhaps, seldom totally avoided by those, whose judgment is much exercised upon the works of art. He has always a certain prospect of discovering new reasons for adoring the sovereign Author of the universe, and probably hopes of making some discovery of benefit to others, or of profit to himself. There is no doubt but many vegetables and animals have qualities that might be of great use, to the knowledge of which there is not required much force of penetration, or fatigue of study, but only frequent experiments, and close attention. What is said by the chemists of their darling mercury, is, perhaps, true of every body through the whole creation, that if a thousand lives should be spent upon it, all its properties would not be found out.

Mankind must necessarily be diversified by various tastes, since life affords and requires such multiplicity of employments, and a nation of naturalists is neither to be hoped or desired; but it is surely not improper to point out a fresh amusement to those who languish in health, and repine in plenty, for want of some source of diversion that may be less easily exhausted, and to inform the multitudes of both sexes, who are burdened with every new day, that there are many shows which they have not seen.

He that enlarges his curiosity after the works of nature, demonstrably multiplies the inlets to happiness; and, therefore, the younger part of my readers, to whom I dedicate this vernal speculation, must excuse me for calling upon them, to make use at once of the spring of the year, and the spring of life; to acquire, while their minds may be yet impressed with new images, a love of innocent pleasures, and an ardor for useful knowledge; and to remember, that a blighted spring makes a barren year, and that the vernal flowers, however beautiful and gay, are only intended by nature as preparatives to autumnal fruits.

No. 6. Saturday, April 7, 1750.

Strenua nos exercet inertia, navibus atque
Quadrigis petimus bene vivere: quod petis, hic est:
Est Ulubris, animus si te non deficit æquus. Hor.

Active in indolence, abroad we roam
In quest of happiness which dwells at home:
With vain pursuits fatigu'd, at length you'll find,
No place excludes it from an equal mind. Elphinston.

That man should never suffer his happiness to depend upon external circumstances, is one of the chief precepts of the Stoical philosophy; a precept, indeed, which that lofty sect has extended beyond the condition of human life, and in which some of them seem to have comprised an utter exclusion of all corporal pain and pleasure from the regard or attention of a wise man.

Such *sapientia insaniens*, as Horace calls the doctrine of another sect, such extravagance of philosophy, can want neither authority nor argument for its confutation: it is overthrown by the experience of every hour, and the powers of nature rise up against it. But we may very properly inquire, how near to this exalted state it is in our power to approach? how far we can exempt ourselves from outward influences, and secure to our minds a state of tranquillity? for, though the boast of absolute independence is ridiculous and vain, yet a mean flexibility to every impulse, and a patient submission to the tyranny of casual troubles, is below the dignity of that mind, which, however depraved or weakened, boasts its derivation from a celestial original, and hopes for an union with infinite goodness, and unvariable felicity.

Ni vitiis pejora fovens
Propium deserat ortum.

Unless the soul, to vice a thrall,
Desert her own original.

The necessity of erecting ourselves to some degree of intellectual dignity, and of preserving resources of pleasure, which may not be wholly at the mercy of accident, is never more apparent than when we turn our eyes upon those whom fortune has let loose to their own conduct; who, not being chained down by their condition to a regular and stated allotment of their hours, are obliged to find themselves business or diversion, and having nothing within that can entertain

or employ them, are compelled to try all the arts of destroying time.

The numberless expedients practised by this class of mortals to alleviate the burthen of life, are not less shameful, nor, perhaps, much less pitiable, than those to which a trader on the edge of bankruptcy is reduced. I have seen melancholy overspread a whole family at the disappointment of a party for cards; and when, after the proposal of a thousand schemes, and the despatch of the footman upon a hundred messages, they have submitted, with gloomy resignation, to the misfortune of passing one evening in conversation with each other; on a sudden, such are the revolutions of the world, an unexpected visitor has brought them relief, acceptable as provision to a starving city, and enabled them to hold out till the next day.

The general remedy of those, who are uneasy without knowing the cause, is change of place; they are willing to imagine that their pain is the consequence of some local inconvenience, and endeavour to fly from it, as children from their shadows; always hoping for some more satisfactory delight from every new scene, and always returning home with disappointment and complaints.

Who can look upon this kind of infatuation, without reflecting on those that suffer under the dreadful symptom of canine madness, termed by physicians the *dread of water*? These miserable wretches, unable to drink, though burning with thirst, are sometimes known to try various contortions, or inclinations of the body, flattering themselves that they can swallow in one posture that liquor which they find in another to repel their lips.

Yet such folly is not peculiar to the thoughtless or ignorant, but sometimes seizes those minds which seem most exempted from it, by the variety of attainments, quickness of penetration, or severity of judgment; and, indeed, the pride of wit and knowledge is often mortified by finding that they confer no security against the common errors, which mislead the weakest and meanest of mankind.

These reflections arose in my mind upon the remembrance of a passage in Cowley's preface to his poems, where, however exalted by genius, and enlarged by study, he informs us of a scheme of happiness to which the imagination of a girl upon the loss of her first lover could have scarcely given way; but which he seems to have indulged, till he had totally forgotten its absurdity, and would probably have put in execution, had he been hindered only by his reason.

"My desire," says he, "has been for some years past,

though the execution has been accidentally diverted, and does still vehemently continue, to retire myself to some of our American plantations, not to seek for gold, or enrich myself with the traffic of those parts, which is the end of most men that travel thither; but to forsake this world for ever, with all the vanities and vexations of it, and to bury myself there in some obscure retreat, but not without the consolation of letters and philosophy."

Such was the chimerical provision which Cowley had made in his own mind, for the quiet of his remaining life, and which he seems to recommend to posterity, since there is no other reason for disclosing it. Surely no stronger instance can be given of a persuasion that content was the inhabitant of particular regions, and that a man might set sail with a fair wind, and leave behind him all his cares, encumbrances, and calamities.

If he travelled so far with no other purpose than to *bury himself in some obscure retreat*, he might have found, in his own country, innumerable coverts sufficiently dark to have concealed the genius of Cowley; for whatever might be his opinion of the importunity with which he might be summoned back into public life, a short experience would have convinced him, that privation is easier than acquisition, and that it would require little continuance to free himself from the intrusion of the world. There is pride enough in the human heart to prevent much desire of acquaintance with a man, by whom we are sure to be neglected, however his reputation for science or virtue may excite our curiosity or esteem; so that the lover of retirement needs not be afraid lest the respect of strangers should overwhelm him with visits. Even those to whom he has formerly been known, will very patiently support his absence when they have tried a little to live without him, and found new diversions for those moments which his company contributed to exhilarate.

It was, perhaps, ordained by Providence, to hinder us from tyrannizing over one another, that no individual should be of such importance, as to cause, by his retirement or death, any chasm in the world. And Cowley had conversed to little purpose with mankind, if he had never remarked, how soon the useful friend, the gay companion, and the favoured lover, when once they are removed from before the sight, give way to the succession of new objects.

The privacy, therefore, of his hermitage might have been safe enough from violation, though he had chosen it within the limits of his native island; he might have found here preservatives against the *vanities* and *vexations* of the world,

not less efficacious than those which the woods or fields of America could afford him: but having once his mind embittered with disgust, he conceived it impossible to be far enough from the cause of his uneasiness; and was posting away with the expedition of a coward, who, for want of venturing to look behind him, thinks the enemy perpetually at his heels.

When he was interrupted by company, or fatigued with business, he so strongly imagined to himself the happiness of leisure and retreat, that he determined to enjoy them for the future without interruption, and to exclude for ever all that could deprive him of his darling satisfactions. He forgot, in the vehemence of desire, that solitude and quiet owe their pleasures to those miseries, which he was so studious to obviate: for such are the vicissitudes of the world, through all its parts, that day and night, labour and rest, hurry and retirement, endear each other; such are the changes that keep the mind in action; we desire, we pursue, we obtain, we are satiated: we desire something else, and begin a new pursuit.

If he had proceeded in his project, and fixed his habitation in the most delightful part of the new world, it may be doubted whether his distance from the *vanities* of life would have enabled him to keep away the *vexations*. It is common for a man, who feels pain, to fancy that he could bear it better in any other part. Cowley having known the troubles and perplexities of a particular condition, readily persuaded himself that nothing worse was to be found, and that every alteration would bring some improvement: he never suspected that the cause of his unhappiness was within, that his own passions were not sufficiently regulated, and that he was harassed by his own impatience, which could never be without something to awaken it, would accompany him over the sea, and find its way to his American elysium. He would, upon the trial, have been soon convinced, that the fountain of content must spring up in the mind; and that he who has so little knowledge of human nature, as to seek happiness by changing any thing but his own dispositions, will waste his life in fruitless efforts, and multiply the griefs which he purposes to remove.*

* See Dr. Johnson's Life of Cowley, vol. ix. p. 10, 16.

No. 7. Tuesday, April 10, 1750.

O qui perpetua mundum ratione gubernas,
Terrarum cœlique sator!———
Dissjice terrenæ nebulas and pondera molis,
Atque tuo splendore mica! Tu namque serenum,
Tu requies tranquilla piis. Te cernere, finis,
Principium, vector, dux, semita, terminus, idem.

Boethius.

O thou whose pow'r o'er moving worlds presides,
Whose voice created, and whose wisdom guides,
On darkling man in pure effulgence shine,
And cheer the clouded mind with light divine.
'Tis thine alone to calm the pious breast
With silent confidence and holy rest:
From thee, great God, we spring, to thee we tend,
Path, motive, guide, original, and end.

The love of *Retirement* has, in all ages, adhered closely to those minds, which have been most enlarged by knowledge, or elevated by genius. Those who enjoyed every thing generally supposed to confer happiness, have been forced to seek it in the shades of privacy. Though they possessed both power and riches, and were, therefore, surrounded by men who considered it as their chief interest to remove from them every thing that might offend their ease, or interrupt their pleasure, they have soon felt the languors of satiety, and found themselves unable to pursue the race of life without frequent respirations of intermediate solitude.

To produce this disposition, nothing appears requisite but quick sensibility, and active imagination; for, though not devoted to virtue, or science, the man, whose faculties enable him to make ready comparisons of the present with the past, will find such a constant recurrence of the same pleasures and troubles, the same expectations and disappointments, that he will gladly snatch an hour of retreat, to let his thoughts expatiate at large, and seek for that variety in his own ideas, which the objects of sense cannot afford him.

Nor will greatness, or abundance, exempt him from the importunities of this desire, since, if he is born to think, he cannot restrain himself from a thousand inquiries and speculations, which he must pursue by his own reason, and which the splendour of his condition can only hinder: for those who are most exalted above dependence or control, are yet condemned to pay so large a tribute of their time to cutsom, ceremony, and popularity, that according to the Greek proverb, no man in the house is more a slave than the master.

When a king asked Euclid, the mathematician, whether he could not explain his art to him in a more compendious manner? he was answered, That there was no royal way to geometry. Other things may be seized by might, or purchased with money, but knowledge is to be gained only by study, and study to be prosecuted only in retirement.

These are some of the motives which have had power to sequester kings and heroes from the crowds that soothed them with flatteries, or inspirited them with acclamations; but their efficacy seems confined to the higher mind, and to operate little upon the common classes of mankind, to whose conceptions the present assemblage of things is adequate, and who seldom range beyond those entertainments and vexations, which solicit their attention by pressing on their senses.

But there is an universal reason for some stated intervals of solitude, which the institutions of the church call upon me now especially to mention; a reason which extends as wide as moral duty, or the hopes of divine favour in a future state; and which ought to influence all ranks of life, and all degrees of intellect; since none can imagine themselves not comprehended in its obligation, but such as determine to set their Maker at defiance by obstinate wickedness, or whose enthusiastic security of his approbation places them above external ordinances, and all human means of improvement.

The great task of him who conducts his life by the precepts of religion, is to make the future predominate over the present, to impress upon his mind so strong a sense of the importance of obedience to the divine will, of the value of the reward promised to virtue, and the terrors of the punishment denounced against crimes, as may overbear all the temptations which temporal hope or fear can bring in his way, and enable him to bid equal defiance to joy and sorrow, to turn away at one time from the allurements of ambition, and push forward at another against the threats of calamity.

It is not without reason that the apostle represents our passage through this stage of our existence by images drawn from the alarms and solicitude of a military life; for we are placed in such a state, that almost every thing about us conspires against our chief interest. We are in danger from whatever can get possession of our thoughts; all that can excite in us either pain or pleasure, has a tendency to obstruct the way that leads to happiness, and either to turn us aside, or retard our progress.

Our senses, our appetites, and our passions, are our lawful *and faithful* guides, in most things that relate solely to this

life; and, therefore, by the hourly necessity of consulting them, we gradually sink into an implicit submission, and habitual confidence. Every act of compliance with their motions facilitates a second compliance, every new step towards depravity is made with less reluctance than the former, and thus the descent to life merely sensual is perpetually accelerated.

The senses have not only that advantage over conscience, which things necessary must always have over things chosen, but they have likewise a kind of prescription in their favour. We feared pain much earlier than we apprehended guilt, and were delighted with the sensations of pleasure, before we had capacities to be charmed with the beauty of rectitude. To this power, thus early established, and incessantly increasing, it must be remembered that almost every man has, in some part of his life, added new strength by a voluntary or negligent subjection of himself; for who is there that has not instigated his appetites by indulgence, or suffered them, by an unresisting neutrality, to enlarge their dominion, and multiply their demands?

From the necessity of dispossessing the sensitive faculties of the influence which they must naturally gain by this preoccupation of the soul, arises that conflict between opposite desires in the first endeavours after a religious life; which, however enthusiastically it may have been described, or however contemptuously ridiculed, will naturally be felt in some degree, though varied without end, by different tempers of mind, and innumerable circumstances of health or condition, greater or less fervour, more or fewer temptations to relapse.

From the perpetual necessity of consulting the animal faculties, in our provision for the present life, arises the difficulty of withstanding their impulses, even in cases where they ought to be of no weight; for the motions of sense are instantaneous, its objects strike unsought, we are accustomed to follow its directions, and therefore often submit to the sentence without examining the authority of the judge.

Thus it appears, upon a philosophical estimate that, supposing the mind, at any certain time, in an equipoise between the pleasures of this life, and the hopes of futurity, present objects falling more frequently into the scale, would in time preponderate, and that our regard for an invisible state would grow every moment weaker, till at last it would lose all its activity, and become absolutely without effect.

To prevent this dreadful event, the balance is put into our own hands, and we have power to transfer the weight to

either side. The motives to a life of holiness are infinite, not less than the favour or anger of Omnipotence, not less than eternity of happiness or misery. But these can only influence our conduct as they gain our attention, which the business or diversions of the world are always calling off by contrary attractions.

The great art therefore of piety, and the end for which all the rites of religion seem to be instituted, is the perpetual renovation of the motives to virtue, by a voluntary employment of our mind in the contemplation of its excellence, its importance, and its necessity, which, in proportion as they are more frequently and more willingly revolved, gain a more forcible and permanent influence, till in time they become the reigning ideas, the standing principles of action, and the test by which every thing proposed to the judgment is rejected or approved.

To facilitate this change of our affections, it is necessary that we weaken the temptations of the world, by retiring at certain seasons from it; for its influence arising only from its presence, is much lessened when it becomes the object of solitary meditation. A constant residence amidst noise and pleasure, inevitably obliterates the impressions of piety, and a frequent abstraction of ourselves into a state, where this life, like the rest, operates only upon the reason, will reinstate religion in its just authority, even without those irraditions from above, the hope of which I have no intention to withdraw from the sincere and the diligent.

This is that conquest of the world and of ourselves, which has been always considered as the perfection of human nature; and this is only to be obtained by fervent prayer, steady resolutions, and frequent retirement from folly and vanity, from the cares of avarice, and the joys of intemperance, from the lulling sounds of deceitful flattery, and the tempting sight of prosperous wickedness.

No. 8. Saturday, April 14, 1750.

——Patitur pœnas peccandi sola voluntas;
Nam scelus intra se tacitum qui cogitat ulum,
Facti crimen habet. Juv.

For he that but conceives a crime in thought,
Contracts the danger of an actual fault. Creech.

If the most active and industrious of mankind was able, at the close of life, to recollect distinctly his past moments, and distribute them in a regular account, according to the man-

ner in which they have been spent, it is scarcely to be imagined how few would be marked out to the mind, by any permanent or visible effects, how small a proportion his real actions would bear to his seeming possibilities of action, how many chasms he would find of wide and continued vacuity, and how many interstitial spaces unfilled, even in the most tumultuous hurries of business, and the most eager vehemence of pursuit.

It is said by modern philosophers, that not only the great globes of matter are thinly scattered through the universe, but the hardest bodies are so porous, that if all matter were compressed to perfect solidity, it might be contained in a cube of a few feet. In like manner, if all the employment of life were crowded into the time which it really occupied, perhaps a few weeks, days, or hours, would be sufficient for its accomplishment, so far as the mind was engaged in the performance. For such is the inequality of our corporeal to our intellectual faculties, that we contrive in minutes what we execute in years, and the soul often stands an idle spectator of the labor of the hands, and expedition of the feet.

For this reason the ancient generals often found themselves at leisure to pursue the study of philosophy in the camp; and Lucan, with historical veracity, makes Cæsar relate of himself, that he noted the revolutions of the stars in the midst of preparations for battle.

> ——*Media inter prælia semper*
> *Sideribus, cælique plagis, superisque vacavi.*
>
> Amid the storms of war, with curious eyes
> I trace the planets and survey the skies.

That the soul always exerts her peculiar powers, with greater or less force, is very probable, though the common occasions of our present condition require but a small part of that incessant cogitation; and by the natural frame of our bodies, and general combination of the world, we are so frequently condemned to inactivity, that as through all our time we are thinking, so for a great part of our time we can only think.

Lest a power so restless should be either unprofitably or hurtfully employed, and the superfluities of intellect run to waste, it is no vain speculation to consider how we may govern our thoughts, restrain them from irregular motions, or confine them from boundless dissipation.

How the understanding is best conducted to the knowledge of science, by what steps it is to be led forwards in its pur-

suit, how it is to be cured of its defects, and habituated to new studies, has been the inquiry of many acute and learned men, whose observations I shall not either adopt or censure: my purpose being to consider the moral discipline of the mind, and to promote the increase of virtue rather than of learning.

This inquiry seems to have been neglected for want of remembering, that all action has its origin in the mind, and that therefore to suffer the thoughts to be vitiated, is to poison the fountains of morality; irregular desires will produce licentious practices; what men allow themselves to wish they will soon believe, and will be at last incited to execute what they please themselves with contriving.

For this reason the casuists of the Roman church, who gain, by confession, great opportunities of knowing human nature, have generally determined that what it is a crime to do, it is a crime to think.* Since by revolving with pleasure the facility, safety, or advantage of a wicked deed, a man soon begins to find his constancy relax, and his detestation soften; the happiness of success glittering before him, withdraws his attention from the atrociousness of the guilt, and acts are at last confidently perpetrated, of which the first conception only crept into the mind, disguised in pleasing complications, and permitted rather than invited.

No man has ever been drawn to crimes by love or jealousy, envy or hatred, but he can tell how easily he might at first have repelled the temptation, how readily his mind would have obeyed a call to any other object, and how weak his passion has been after some casual avocation, till he has recalled it again to his heart, and revived the viper by too warm a fondness.

Such, therefore, is the importance of keeping reason a constant guard over imagination, that we have otherwise no security for our own virtue, but may corrupt our hearts in the most recluse solitude, with more pernicious and tyrannical appetites and wishes than the commerce of the world will generally produce; for we are easily shocked by crimes which appear at once in their full magnitude, but the gradual growth of our own wickedness, endeared by interest, and palliated by all the artifices of self-deceit, gives us time to form distinctions in our own favour, and reason by degrees submits to absurdity, as the eye is in time accommodated to darkness.

* This was determined before their time. See Matt. ch. v. v. 28. C.

In this disease of the soul, it is of the utmost importance to apply remedies at the beginning; and therefore I shall endeavour to show what thoughts are to be rejected or improved, as they regard the past, present, or future; in hopes that some may be awakened to caution and vigilance, who, perhaps, indulge themselves in dangerous dreams, so much the more dangerous, because, being yet only dreams, they are concluded innocent.

The recollection of the past is only useful by way of provision for the future: and, therefore, in reviewing all occurrences that fall under a religious consideration, it is proper that a man stop at the first thoughts, to remark how he was led thither, and why he continues the reflection. If he is dwelling with delight upon a stratagem of successful fraud, a night of licentious riot, or an intrigue of guilty pleasure, let him summon off his imagination as from an unlawful pursuit, expel those passages from his remembrance, of which, though he cannot seriously approve them, the pleasure overpowers the guilt, and refer them to a future hour, when they may be considered with greater safety. Such an hour will certainly come; for the impressions of past pleasure are always lessening, but the sense of guilt, which respects futurity, continues the same.

The serious and impartial retrospect of our conduct, is indisputably necessary to the confirmation or recovery of virtue, and is, therefore, recommended under the name of self-examination, by divines, as the first act previous to repentance. It is, indeed, of so great use, that without it we should always be to begin life, be seduced for ever by the same allurements, and misled by the same fallacies. But in order that we may not lose the advantage of our experience, we must endeavour to see every thing in its proper form, and excite in ourselves those sentiments, which the great author of nature has decreed the concomitants or followers of good or bad actions.

Μηδ' ὕπνον μαλακοῖσιν ἐπ' ὄμμασι προσδέξασθαι,
Πρὶν τῶν ἡμερινῶν ἔργων τρὶς ἕκαστον ἐπελθεῖν.
Πῇ παρέβην; τί δ' ἔρεξα; τί μοι δέον οὐκ ἐτελέσθη;
Ἀρξάμενος δ' ἀπὸ πρώτου πρήξιος καὶ μετέπειτα,
Δειλὰ μὲν ἐκτρηξάς, ἐπιπλήσσεο, χρηστὰ δὲ, τέρπου.

Let not sleep, says Pythagoras, *fall upon thy eyes till thou hast thrice reviewed the transactions of the past day. Where have I turned aside from rectitude? What have I been doing? What have I left undone, which I ought to have done? Begin thus from the first act, and proceed; and in conclusion, at the ill which thou hast done be troubled, and rejoice for the good.*

Our thoughts on present things being determined by the objects before us, fall not under those indulgences, or excursions, which I am now considering. But I cannot forbear, under this head, to caution pious and tender minds, that are disturbed by the irruptions of wicked imaginations, against too great dejection, and too anxious alarms; for thoughts are only criminal, when they are first chosen, and then voluntarily continued.

> Evil into the mind of God or man
> May come and go, so unapprov'd, and leave
> No spot or stain behind. MILTON.

In futurity chiefly are the snares lodged, by which the imagination is entangled. Futurity is the proper abode of hope and fear, with all their train and progeny of subordinate apprehensions and desires. In futurity events and chances are yet floating at large, without apparent connexion with their causes, and we therefore easily indulge the liberty of gratifying ourselves with a pleasing choice. To pick and cull among possible advantages is, as the civil law terms it, *in vacuum venire*, to take what belongs to nobody; but it has this hazard in it, that we shall be unwilling to quit what we have seized, though an owner should be found. It is easy to think on that which may be gained, till at last we resolve to gain it, and to image the happiness of particular conditions, till we can be easy in no other. We ought, at least, to let our desires fix upon nothing in another's power for the sake of our quiet, or in another's possession for the sake of our innocence. When a man finds himself led, though by a train of honest sentiments, to wish for that to which he has no right, he should start back as from a pitfall covered with flowers. He that fancies he should benefit the public more in a great station than the man that fills it, will in time imagine it an act of virtue to supplant him; and as opposition readily kindles into hatred, his eagerness to do that good to which he is not called, will betray him to crimes, which in his original scheme were never proposed.

He therefore that would govern his actions by the laws of virtue, must regulate his thoughts by those of reason; he must keep guilt from the recesses of his heart, and remember that the pleasures of fancy, and the emotions of desire, are more dangerous as they are more hidden, since they escape the awe of observation, and operate equally in every situation, without the concurrence of external opportunities.

No. 9. Tuesday, April 17, 1750.

Quod sis esse velis, nihilque malis. Mart.

Choose what you are; no other state prefer. Elphinston.

It is justly remarked by Horace, that howsoever every man may complain occasionally of the hardships of his condition, he is seldom willing to change it for any other on the same level; for whether it be, that he who follows an employment, made choice of it at first on account of its suitableness to his inclination; or that when accident, or the determination of others, have placed him in a particular station, he, by endeavouring to reconcile himself to it, gets the custom of viewing it only on the fairest side; or whether every man thinks that class to which he belongs the most illustrious, merely because he has honoured it with his name; it is certain that, whatever be the reason, most men have a very strong and active prejudice in favour of their own vocation, always working upon their minds, and influencing their behaviour.

This partiality is sufficiently visible in every rank of the human species: but it exerts itself more frequently, and with greater force among those who have never learned to conceal their sentiments for reasons of policy, or to model their expressions by the laws of politeness; and therefore the chief contests of wit among artificers and handicraftsmen arise from a mutual endeavour to exalt one trade by depreciating another.

From the same principles are derived many consolations to alleviate the inconveniences to which every calling is peculiarly exposed. A blacksmith was lately pleasing himself at his anvil, with observing, that though his trade was hot and sooty, laborious and unhealthy, yet he had the honour of living by his hammer, he got his bread like a man, and if his son should rise in the world, and keep his coach, nobody could reproach him that his father was a tailor.

A man truly zealous for his fraternity, is never so irresistibly flattered, as when some rival calling is mentioned with contempt. Upon this principle, a linen-draper boasted that he had got a new customer, whom he could safely trust, for he could have no doubt of his honesty, since it was known, from unquestionable authority, that he was now filing a bill in chancery to delay payment for the clothes which he had worn the last seven years: and he himself had heard him

declare, in a public coffee-house, that he looked upon the whole generation of woollen-drapers to be such despicable wretches, that no gentleman ought to pay them.

It has been observed, that physicians and lawyers are no friends to religion: and many conjectures have been formed to discover the reason of such a combination between men who agree in nothing else, and who seem less to be affected, in their own provinces, by religious opinions, than any other part of the community. The truth is, very few of them have thought about religion; but they have all seen a parson; seen him in a habit different from their own, and therefore declared war against him. A young student from the inns of court, who has often attacked the curate of his father's parish with such arguments as his acquaintances could furnish, and returned to town without success, is now gone down with a resolution to destroy him; for he has learned at last how to manage a prig, and if he pretends to hold him again to syllogism, he has a catch in reserve, which neither logic nor metaphysics can resist.

> I laugh to think how your unshaken Cato
> Will look aghast, when unforeseen destruction
> Pours in upon him thus.

The malignity of soldiers and sailors against each other, has often been experienced at the cost of their country; and, perhaps, no orders of men have an enemy of more acrimony, or longer continuance. When upon our late successes at sea, some new regulations were concerted for establishing the rank of the naval commanders, a captain of foot very acutely remarked, that nothing was more absurd than to give any honorary rewards to seamen; "for honour," says he, "ought only to be won by bravery, and all the world knows that in a sea-fight there is no danger, and therefore no evidence of courage."

But although this general desire of aggrandizing themselves, by raising their profession, betrays men to a thousand ridiculous and mischievous acts of supplantation and detraction, yet as almost all passions have their good as well as bad effects, it likewise excites ingenuity, and sometimes raises an honest and useful emulation of diligence. It may be observed, in general, that no trade had ever reached the excellence to which it is now improved, had its professors looked upon it with the eyes of indifferent spectators; the advances, from the first rude essays must have been made by men who valued themselves for performances, for which scarce any other would be persuaded to esteem them.

It is pleasing to contemplate a manufacture rising gradually from its first mean state by the successive labours of innumerable minds; to consider the first hollow trunk of an oak, in which, perhaps, the shepherd could scarce venture to cross a brook swelled with a shower, enlarged at last into a ship of war, attacking fortresses, terrifying nations, setting storms and billows at defiance, and visiting the remotest parts of the globe. And it might contribute to dispose us to a kinder regard for the labours of one another, if we were to consider from what unpromising beginnings the most useful productions of art have probably arisen. Who, when he saw the first sand or ashes, by a casual intenseness of heat, melted into a metalline form, rugged with excrescences, and clouded with impurities, would have imagined that in this shapeless lump lay concealed so many conveniences of life, as would in time constitute a great part of the happiness of the world? Yet by some such fortuitous liquefaction was mankind taught to procure a body at once in a high degree solid and transparent, which might admit the light of the sun, and exclude the violence of the wind: which might extend the sight of the philosopher to new ranges of existence, and charm him at one time with the unbounded extent of the material creation, and at another with the endless subordination of animal life; and, what is yet of more importance, might supply the decays of nature, and succour old age with subsidiary sight. Thus was the first artificer in glass employed, though without his own knowledge or expectation. He was facilitating and prolonging the enjoyment of light, enlarging the avenues of science, and conferring the highest and most lasting pleasures; he was enabling the student to contemplate nature, and the beauty to behold herself.

This passion for the honour of a profession, like that for the grandeur of our own country, is to be regulated, not extinguished. Every man, from the highest to the lowest station, ought to warm his heart, and animate his endeavours with the hopes of being useful to the world, by advancing the art which it is his lot to exercise, and for that end he must necessarily consider the whole extent of its application, and the whole weight of its importance. But let him not too readily imagine, that another is ill employed, because, for want of fuller knowledge of his business, he is not able to comprehend its dignity. Every man ought to endeavour at eminence, not by pulling others down, but by raising himself, and enjoy the pleasure of his own superiority, whether imaginary or real, without interrupting others in the same felicity. The philosopher may

very justly be delighted with the extent of his views, and the artificer with the readiness of his hands; but let the one remember, that, without mechanical performances, refined speculation is an empty dream; and the other, that, without theoretical reasoning, dexterity is little more than a brute instinct.

No. 10. Saturday, April 21, 1750.

Posthabui tamen illorum mea seria ludo. Virg.

For trifling sports I quitted grave affairs.

The number of correspondents which increases every day upon me shows that my paper is at least distinguished from the common productions of the press. It is no less a proof of eminence to have many enemies than many friends, and I look upon every letter, whether it contains encomiums or reproaches, as an equal attestation of rising credit. The only pain, which I can feel from my correspondence, is the fear of disgusting those, whose letters I shall neglect; and therefore I take this opportunity of reminding them, that in disapproving their attempts, whenever it may happen, I only return the treatment which I often receive. Besides, many particular motives influence a writer, known only to himself, or his private friends; and it may be justly concluded, that not all letters which are postponed are rejected, nor all that are rejected, critically condemned.

Having thus eased my heart of the only apprehension that sat heavy on it, I can please myself with the candour of Benevolus, who encourages me to proceed, without sinking under the anger of Flirtilla, who quarrels with me for being old and ugly, and for wanting both activity of body and sprightliness of mind; feeds her monkey with my lucubrations, and refuses any reconciliation till I have appeared in vindication of masquerades. That she may not, however, imagine me without support, and left to rest wholly upon my own fortitude, I shall now publish some letters which I have received from men as well dressed, and as handsome, as her favourite; and others from ladies, whom I sincerely believe as young, as rich, as gay, as pretty, as fashionable, and as often toasted and treated as herself.

"A set of candid readers send their respects to the Rambler, and acknowledge his merit in so well beginning a work that may be of public benefit. But, superior as his genius is

to the impertinences of a trifling age, they cannot help a wish, that he would condescend to the weakness of minds softened by perpetual amusements, and now and then throw in, like his predecessors, some papers of a gay and humourous turn. Too fair a field now lays open, with too plentiful a harvest of follies! let the cheerful Thalia put in her sickle, and singing at her work, deck her hair with red and blue."

"A lady sends her compliments to the Rambler, and desires to know by what other name she may direct to him; what are his set of friends, his amusements; what his way of thinking, with regard to the living world, and its ways: in short, whether he is a person now alive, and in town? If he be, she will do herself the honour to write to him pretty often, and hopes, from time to time, to be the better for his advice and animadversions; for his animadversions on her neighbours at least. But, if he is a mere essayist, and troubles not himself with the manners of the age, she is sorry to tell him, that even the genius and correctness of an Addison, will not secure him from neglect."

No man is so much abstracted from common life, as not to feel a particular pleasure from the regard of the female world; the candid writers of the first billet will not be offended, that my haste to satisfy a lady has hurried their address too soon out of my mind, and that I refer them for a reply to some future paper, in order to tell this curious inquirer after my other name, the answer of a philosopher to a man, who meeting him in the street, desired to see what he carried under his cloak; *I carry it there*, says he, *that you may not see it*. But, though she is never to know my name, she may often see my face; for I am of her opinion that a diurnal writer ought to view the world, and that he who neglects his contemporaries, may be, with justice neglected by them.

"Lady Racket sends compliments to the Rambler, and lets him know she shall have cards at her house every Sunday, the remainder of the season, where he will be sure of meeting all the good company in town. By this means she hopes to see his papers interspersed with living characters. She longs to see the torch of truth produced at an assembly, and to admire the charming lustre it will throw on the jewels, complexions, and behaviour of every dear creature there."

It is a rule with me to receive every offer with the same civility as it is made; and therefore, though lady Racket may have had some reason to guess, that I seldom frequent card tables on Sundays, I shall not insist upon an exception, which may to her appear of so little force. My business has been to view, as opportunity was offered, every place in which man-

kind was to be seen; but at card tables, however brilliant, I have always thought my visit lost, for I could know nothing of the company, but their clothes and their faces. I saw their looks clouded at the beginning of every game with an uniform solicitude, now and then in its progress varied with a short triumph, at one time wrinkled with cunning, at another deadened with despondency, or by accident flushed with rage at the unskilful or unlucky play of a partner. From such assemblies, in whatever humour I happened to enter them, I was quickly forced to retire; they were too trifling for me, when I was grave, and too dull, when I was cheerful.

Yet I cannot but value myself upon this token of regard from a lady who is not afraid to stand before the torch of truth. Let her not, however, consult her curiosity more than her prudence; but reflect a moment on the fate of Semele, who might have lived the favourite of Jupiter, if she could have been content without his thunder. It is dangerous for mortal beauty, or terrestrial virtue, to be examined by too strong a light. The torch of truth shows much that we cannot, and all that we would not see. In a face dimpled with smiles, it has often discovered malevolence and envy, and detected under jewels and brocade, the frightful forms of poverty and distress. A fine hand of cards have changed before it into a thousand spectres of sickness, misery, and vexation; and immense sums of money, while the winner counted them with transport, have at the first glimpse of this unwelcome lustre vanished from before him. If her ladyship therefore designs to continue her assembly, I would advise her to shun such dangerous experiments, to satisfy herself with common appearances, and to light up her apartments rather with myrtle than the torch of truth.

"A modest young man sends his service to the author of the Rambler, and will be very willing to assist him in his work, but is sadly afraid of being discouraged by having his first essay rejected, a disgrace he has wofully experienced in every offer he made of it to every new writer of every new paper; but he comforts himself by thinking, without vanity, that this has been from a peculiar favour of the muses, who saved his performance from being buried in trash, and reserved it to appear with lustre in the Rambler."

I am equally a friend to modesty and enterprise; and therefore shall think it an honour to correspond with a young man who possesses both in so eminent a degree. Youth is, indeed, the time in which these qualities ought chiefly to be found; modesty suits well with inexperience, and enterprise with health and vigour, and extensive prospect of life. One of my

predecessors has justly observed, that though modesty has an amiable and winning appearance, it ought not to hinder the exertion of the active powers, but that a man should show under his blushes a latent resolution. This point of perfection, nice as it is, my correspondent seems to have attained. That he is modest, his own declaration may evince; and, I think, the *latent resolution* may be discovered in his letter by an acute observer. I will advise him, since he so well deserves my precepts, not to be discouraged though the Rambler should prove equally envious, or tasteless, with the rest of this fraternity. If his paper is refused, the presses of England are open, let him try the judgment of the public. If, as it has sometimes happened in general combinations against merit, he cannot persuade the world to buy his works, he may present them to his friends; and if his friends are seized with the epidemical infatuation, and cannot find his genius, or will not confess it, let him then refer his cause to posterity, and reserve his labours for a wiser age.

Thus have I despatched some of my correspondents in the usual manner, with fair words, and general civility. But to Flirtilla, the gay Flirtilla, what shall I reply? Unable as I am to fly, at her command, over land and seas, or to supply her from week to week with the fashions of Paris, or the intrigues of Madrid, I am yet not willing to incur her further displeasure, and would save my papers from her monkey on any reasonable terms. By what propitiation, therefore, may I atone for my former gravity, and open, without trembling, the future letters of this sprightly persecutor? To write in defence of masquerades is no easy task; yet something difficult and daring may well be required, as the price of so important an approbation. I therefore consulted, in this great emergency, a man of high reputation in gay life, who, having added to his other accomplishments, no mean proficiency in the minute philosophy, after the fifth perusal of her letter, broke out with rapture into these words: 'And can you, Mr. Rambler, stand out against this charming creature? Let her know, at least, that from this moment Nigrinus devotes his life and his labours to her service. Is their any stubborn prejudice of education, that stands between thee and the most amiable of mankind? Behold, Flirtilla, at thy feet, a man grown gray in the study of those noble arts by which right and wrong may be confounded; by which reason may be blinded, when we have a mind to escape from her inspection; and caprice and appetite instated in uncontroled command, and boundless dominion! Such a casuist may surely engage, with certainty of success, in vindication of an entertainment,

which in an instant gives confidence to the timorous, and kindles ardour in the cold; an entertainment where the vigilance of jealousy has so often been eluded, and the virgin is set free from the necessity of languishing in silence; where all the outworks of chastity are at once demolished; where the heart is laid open without a blush; where bashfulness may survive virtue, and no wish is crushed under the frown of modesty. Far weaker influence than Flirtilla's might gain over an advocate for such amusements. It was declared by Pompey, that if the commonwealth was violated, he could stamp with his foot, and raise an army out of the ground; if the rights of pleasure are again invaded, let but Flirtilla crack her fan, neither pens, nor swords, shall be wanting at the summons; the wit and the colonel shall march out at her command, and neither law nor reason shall stand before us.*

No. 11. Tuesday, April 24, 1750.

Non Dindymene, non adytis quatit
Mentem sacerdotum incola Pythius,
Non Liber æque, non acuta
Sic geminant Corybantes æra,
Tristes ut iræ. —— Hor.

Yet O! remember, nor the god of wine,
Nor *Pythian Phœbus* from his inmost shrine,
Nor *Dindymene* nor her priests possest,
Can with their sounding cymbals shake the breast,
Like furious anger. Francis.

The maxim which Periander of Corinth, one of the seven sages of Greece, left as a memorial of his knowledge and benevolence, was χόλυ κράτει, *Be master of thy anger.* He considered anger as the great disturber of human life, the chief enemy both of public happiness and private tranquillity, and thought that he could not lay on posterity a stronger obligation to reverence his memory, than by leaving them a salutary caution against this outrageous passion.

To what latitude Periander might extend the word, the brevity of his precept will scarce allow us to conjecture. From anger, in its full import, protracted into malevolence, and exerted in revenge, arise, indeed, many of the evil

* The four billets in this paper were written by Miss Mulso, after Mrs. Chapone, who survived this work more than half a century, i Dec. 25, 1801. See an account of her in the Preface to the Adv "British Essayists," vol. 23.

which the life of man is exposed. By anger operating upon power are produced the subversion of cities, the desolation of countries, the massacre of nations, and all those dreadful and astonishing calamities which fill the histories of the world, and which could not be read at any distant point of time, when the passions stand neutral, and every motive and principle is left to its natural force, without some doubt of the truth of the relation, did we not see the same causes still tending to the same effects, and only acting with less vigour for want of the same concurrent opportunities.

But this gigantic and enormous species of anger falls not properly under the animadversion of a writer, whose chief end is the regulation of common life, and whose precepts are to recommend themselves by their general use. Nor is this essay intended to expose the tragical or fatal effects even of private malignity. The anger which I propose now for my subject, is such as makes those who indulge it more troublesome than formidable, and ranks them rather with hornets and wasps, than with basilisks and lions. I have, therefore, prefixed a motto, which characterizes this passion, not so much by the mischief that it causes as by the noise that it utters.

There is in the world a certain class of mortals, known, and contentedly known, by the appellation of *passionate men*, who imagine themselves entitled by that distinction to be provoked on every slight occasion, and to vent their rage in vehement and fierce vociferations, in furious menaces and licentious reproaches. Their rage, indeed, for the most part, fumes away in outcries of injury, and protestations of vengeance, and seldom proceeds to actual violence, unless a drawer or linkboy falls in their way; but they interrupt the quiet of those that happen to be within the reach of their clamors, obstruct the course of conversation, and disturb the enjoyment of society.

Men of this kind are sometimes not without understanding or virtue, and are, therefore, not always treated with the severity which their neglect of the ease of all about them might justly provoke; they have obtained a kind of prescription for their folly, and are considered by their companions as under a predominant influence that leaves them not masters of their conduct or language, as acting without consciousness, and rushing into mischief with a mist before their eyes; they are therefore pitied rather than censured, and their sallies are passed over as the involuntary blows of a man agitated by the spasms of a convulsion.

It is surely not to be observed without indignation, that

men may be found of minds mean enough to be satisfied with this treatment; wretches who are proud to obtain the privilege of madmen, and can, without shame, and without regret, consider themselves as receiving hourly pardons from their companions, and giving them continual opportunities of exercising their patience, and boasting their clemency.

Pride is undoubtedly the original of anger; but pride, like every other passion, breaks loose from reason, counteracts its [illegible] purpose. A passionate man upon the review of his day, will have very few gratifications to offer to his pride, when he has considered how his outrages were caused, why they were born, and in what they are likely to end at last.

Those sudden bursts of rage generally break out upon small occasions; for life, unhappy as it is, cannot supply great evils, as frequently as the man of fire thinks it fit to be enraged; therefore the first reflection upon his violence must show him that he is mean enough to be driven from his post by every petty incident, that he is the mere slave of casualty, and that his reason and virtue are in the power of the wind.

One motive there is of these loud extravagancies, which a man is careful to conceal from others, and does not always discover to himself. He that finds his knowledge narrow, and his arguments weak, and by consequence his suffrage not much regarded, is sometimes in hope of gaining that attention by his clamours which he cannot otherwise obtain, and is pleased with remembering that at least he made himself heard, that he had the power to interrupt those whom he could not confute, and suspend the decision which he could not guide.

Of this kind is the fury to which many men give way among their servants and domestics; they feel their own ignorance, they see their own insignificance; and therefore they endeavour, by their fury, to fright away contempt from before them, when they know it must follow them behind; and think themselves eminently masters, when they see one folly tamely complied with, only lest refusal or delay should provoke them to a greater.

These temptations cannot but be owned to have some force. It is so little pleasing to any man to see himself wholly overlooked in the mass of things, that he may be allowed to try a few expedients for procuring some kind of supplemental dignity, and use some endeavour to add weight, by the violence of his temper, to the lightness of his other powers. But this has now been long practised, and found, upon the most exact estimate, not to produce advantages equal to its inconveniencies; for it appears not that a man can by uproar, tumult,

and blaster, alter any one's opinion of his understanding, or gain influence, except over those whom fortune or nature have made his dependants. He may, by a steady perseverance in his ferocity, fright his children, and harass his servants, but the rest of the world will look on and laugh; and he will have the comfort at last of thinking, that he lives only to raise contempt and hatred, emotions to which wisdom and virtue would be always unwilling to give occasion. He has contrived only to make those fear him, whom every reasonable being is endeavouring to endear by kindness, and must content himself with the pleasure of a triumph obtained by trampling on them who could not resist. He must perceive that the apprehension which his presence causes is not the awe of his virtue, but the dread of his brutality, and that he has given up the felicity of being loved, without gaining the honour of being reverenced.

But this is not the only ill consequence of the frequent indulgence of this blustering passion, which a man, by often calling to his assistance, will teach, in a short time, to intrude before the summons, to rush upon him with resistless violence, and without any previous notice of its approach. He will find himself liable to be inflamed at the first touch of provocation, and unable to retain his resentment, till he has a full conviction of the offence, to proportion his anger to the cause, or to regulate it by prudence or by duty. When a man has once suffered his mind to be thus vitiated, he becomes one of the most hateful and unhappy beings. He can give no security to himself that he shall not, at the next interview, alienate by some sudden transport his dearest friend; or break out, upon some slight contradiction, into such terms of rudeness as can never be perfectly forgotten. Whoever converses with him, lives with the suspicion and solitude of a man that plays with a tame tiger, always under a necessity of watching the moment in which the capricious savage shall begin to growl.

It is told by Prior, in a panegyric on the earl of Dorset, that his servants used to put themselves in his way when he was angry, because he was sure to recompense them for any indignities which he made them suffer. This is the round of a passionate man's life; he contracts debts when he is furious, which his virtue, if he has virtue, obliges him to discharge at the return of reason. He spends his time in outrage and acknowledgment, injury and reparation. Or, if there be any who hardens himself in oppression, and justifies the wrong, because he has done it, his insensibility can make small part of his praise, or his happiness: he only adds deliberate to hasty

folly, aggravates petulance by contumacy, and destroys the only plea that he can offer for the tenderness and patience of mankind.

Yet, even this degree of depravity we may be content to pity, because it seldom wants a punishment equal to its guilt. Nothing is more despicable or more miserable than the old age of a passionate man. When the vigour of youth fails him, and his amusement[illegible] [illegible]quent repetition, his occasional rage sinks [illegible] [illegible]ngth into peevishness; that peevishness, for [illegible] [illegible] and variety, becomes habitual; the world [illegible] off [illegible] around him, and he is left as Homer expresses it, φθιν[illegible] [illegible]ίλον κηρ, to devour his own heart in solitude and contempt.

No. 12. Saturday, April 28, 1750.

——Miserum parvâ stipe focilat, ut pudibundos
Exercere sales inter convivia possit.——
——Tu mitis, et acri
Asperitate carens, positoque per omnia fastu,
Inter ut æquales unus numeraris amicos,
Obsequiumque doces et amorem quæris amando.

Lucanus *ad* Pisones.

Unlike the ribald whose licentious jest
Pollutes his banquet, and insults his guest;
From wealth and grandeur easy to descend,
Thou joy'st to lose the master in the friend:
We round thy board the cheerful menials see,
Gay with the smile of bland equality;
No social care the gracious lord disdains;
Love prompts to love, and rev'rence rev'rence gains.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir,—As you seem to have devoted your labours to virtue, I cannot forbear to inform you of one species of cruelty with whichthe life of a man of letters perhaps does not often make him acquainted; and which, as it seems to produce no other advantage to those that practise it than a short gratification of thoughtless vanity, may become less common when it has been once exposed in its various forms, and its full magnitude.

I am the daughter of a country gentleman, whose family is numerous, and whose estate, not at first sufficient to supply us with affluence, has been lately so much impaired by

an unsuccessful law-suit, that all the younger children are obliged to try such means, as their education affords them, for procuring the necessaries of life. Distress and curiosity concurred to bring me to London, where I was received by a relation with the coldness which misfortune generally finds. A week, a long week, I lived with my cousin, before the most vigilant inquiry could procure us the least hopes of a place, in which time I was much better qualified to bear all the vexations of servitude. The first two days she was content to pity me, and only wished I had not been quite so well bred; but people must comply with their circumstances. This lenity, however, was soon at an end; and, for the remaining part of the week, I heard every hour of the pride of my family, the obstinacy of my father, and of people better born than myself that were common servants.

At last, on Saturday noon, she told me, with very visible satisfaction, that Mrs. Bombasine, the great silk-mercer's lady, wanted a maid, and a fine place it would be, for there would be nothing to do but to clean my mistress's room, get up her linen, dress the young ladies, wait at tea in the morning, take care of a little miss just come from nurse, and then sit down to my needle. But madam was a woman of great spirit, and would not be contradicted, and therefore I should take care, for good places were not easily to be got.

With these cautions I waited on madam Bombasine, of whom the first sight gave me no ravishing ideas. She was two yards round the waist, her voice was at once loud and squeaking, and her face brought to my mind the picture of the full moon. Are you the young woman, says she, that are come to offer yourself? It is strange when people of substance want a servant, how soon it is the town-talk. But they know they shall have a belly-full that live with me. Not like people at the other end of the town, we dine at one o'clock. But I never take any body without a character; what friends do you come of? I then told her that my father was a gentleman, and that we had been unfortunate.—A great misfortune indeed, to come to me, and have three meals a day!—So your father was a gentleman, and you are a gentlewoman I suppose—such gentlewomen!—Madam, I did not mean to claim any exemptions, I only answered your inquiry—Such gentlewomen! people should set their children to good trades, and keep them off the parish. Pray go to the other end of the town, there are gentlewomen, if they would pay their debts: I am sure we have lost enough by gentlewomen. Upon this, her broad face grew broader with triumph, and I was afraid she would have taken me for the pleasure of con-

tinuing her insult; but happily the next word was, Pray, Mrs. gentlewoman, troop down stairs.—You may believe I obeyed her.

I returned and met with a better reception from my cousin than I expected; for while I was out, she had heard that Mrs. Standish, whose husband had lately been raised from a clerk in an office, to be commissioner of the excise, had taken a fine house, and wanted a maid.

To Mrs. Sta[illegible], after having waited six hours, was at la[illegible] top of the stairs, when she came out of her [illegible] her company. There was a smell of punch[illegible] woman, you want a place: whence do you co[illegible] country, madam.—Yes. they all come out o[illegible] And what brought you to town, a bastard? [illegible] lodge? At the Seven-Dials. What, you never hea[illegible] handling-house! Upon this, they all laughed so obstre[illegible], that I took the opportunity of sneaking off in the tumult.

I then heard of a place at an elderly lady's. She was at cards; but in two hours, I was told, she would speak to me. She asked me if I could keep an account, and ordered me to write. I wrote two lines out of some book that lay by her. She wondered what people meant, to breed up poor girls to write at that rate. I suppose, Mrs. Flirt, if I was to see your work, it would be fine stuff!—You may walk. I will not have love-letters written from my house to every young fellow in the street.

Two days after, I went on the same pursuit to lady Lofty, dressed as I was directed, in what little ornaments I had, because she had lately got a place at court. Upon the first sight of me, she turns to the woman that showed me in. Is this the lady that wants a place? Pray what place would you have, Miss? a maid of honour's place? Servants now-a-day! Madam I heard you wanted—Wanted what? Somebody finer than myself? A pretty servant indeed—I should be afraid to speak to her—I suppose, Mrs. Minx, these fine hands cannot bear wetting—A servant indeed! Pray move off—I am resolved to be the head person in this house—You are ready dressed, the taverns will be open.

I went to inquire for the next place in a clean linen gown, and heard the servant tell his lady, there was a young woman, but he saw she would not do. I was brought up, however, are you the trollop that has the impudence to come for my place? What, you have hired that nasty gown, and are come to steal a better. Madam, I have another, but being obliged to walk—Then these are your manners, with your blushes and

your courtesies, to come to me in your worst gown. Madam, give me leave to wait upon you in my other. Wait on me, you saucy slut! Then you are sure of coming—I could not let such a drab come near me—Here, you girl, that came up with her, have you touched her? If you have, wash your hands before you dress me—Such trollops! Get you down. What, whimpering? Pray walk.

I went away with tears; for my cousin had lost all patience. However, she told me, that having a respect for my relations, she was willing to keep me out of the street, and would let me have another week.

The first day of this week I saw two places. At one I was asked where I had lived? and upon my answer, was told by the lady, that people should qualify themselves in ordinary places, for she should never have done if she was to follow girls about. At the other house I was a smirking huzzy, and that sweet face I might make money of—For her part, it was a rule with her never to take any creature that thought herself handsome.

The three next days were spent in Lady Bluff's entry, where I waited six hours every day for the pleasure of seeing the servants peep at me, and go away laughing. Madam will stretch her small shanks in the entry; she will know the house again. At sunset the two first days, I was told, that my lady would see me to-morrow, and on the third, that her woman staid.

My week was now near its end, and I had no hopes of a place. My relation, who always laid upon me the blame of every miscarriage, told me that I must learn to humble myself, and that all great ladies had particular ways; that if I went on in that manner, she could not tell who would keep me: she had known many that had refused places, sell their clothes, and beg in the streets.

It was to no purpose that the refusal was declared by me to be never on my side; I was reasoning against interest, and against stupidity; and therefore I comforted myself with the hope of succeeding better in my next attempt, and went to Mrs. Courtly, a very fine lady, who had routes at her house, and saw the best company in town.

I had not waited two hours before I was called up, and found Mr. Courtly and his lady at piquet, in the height of good humour. This I looked on as a favourable sign, and stood at the lower end of the room, in expectation of the common questions. At last Mr. Courtly called out, after a whisper, Stand facing the light, that one may see you. I changed my place and blushed. They frequently turned their eyes

upon me, and seemed to discover many subjects of merriment; for at every look they whispered, and laughed with the most violent agitations of delight. At last Mr. Courtly cryed out, Is that colour your own, child? Yes, says the lady, if she had not robbed the kitchen hearth. This was so happy a conceit, that it renewed the storm of laughter, and they threw down their cards in hopes of better sport. The lady then called me to her, and began with an affected gravity to inquire what I could do? But first turn about, and let us see your fine shape: well what are you fit for, Mrs. Mum? You would find your tongue I suppose, in the kitchen. No, no, says Mr. Courtley, the girl's a good girl yet, but am afraid a brisk young fellow, with fine tags on his shoulder——Come child, hold up your head; what? you have stole nothing.——Not yet, says the lady, but she hopes to steal your heart quickly. Here was a laugh of happiness and triumph, prolonged by the confusion which I could no longer repress. At last the lady recollected herself; stole! no—but if I had her, I should watch her: for that downcast eye—Why cannot you look people in the face? Steal! says her husband, she would steal nothing but, perhaps, a few ribands before they were left off by her lady. Sir, answered I, why should you, by supposing me a thief, insult one from whom you have received no injury? Insult! says the lady; are you come here to be a servant, you saucy baggage, and talk of insulting? What will this world come to, if a gentleman may not jest with a servant! Well, such servants! pray be gone, and see when you will have the honour to be so insulted again. Servants insulted!—a fine time—Insulted! Get down stairs, yor slut, or the footman shall insult you!

The last day of the last week was now coming, and my kind cousin talked of sending me down in the wagon to preserve me from bad courses. But in the morning she came and told me that she had one trial more for me; Euphemia wanted a maid and perhaps I might do for her; for like me, she must fall her crest, being forced to lay down her chariot upon the loss of half her fortune by bad securities, and with her way of giving her money to every body that pretended to want it, she could have little beforehand; therefore I might serve her; for with all her fine sense, she must not pretend to be nice.

I went immediately, and met at the door a young gentlewoman, who told me she had herself been hired that morning, but that she was ordered to bring any that offered up stairs. I was accordingly introduced to Euphemia, who, when I came in, laid down her book, and told me that she sent for me not to gratify an idle curiosity, but lest my disappointment might

be made still more grating by incivility; that she was in pain to deny any thing, much more what was no favour; that she saw nothing in my appearance which did not make her wish for my company; but that another, whose claims might perhaps be equal, had come before me. The thought of being so near to such a place, and missing it, brought tears into my eyes, and my sobs hindered me from returning my acknowledgments. She rose up confused, and supposing by my concern that I was distressed, placed me by her, and made me tell her my story: which when she had heard, she put two guineas in my hand, ordering me to lodge near her, and make use of her table till she could provide for me. I am now under her protection, and know not how to show my gratitude better than by giving this account to the *Rambler*.

ZOSIMA.

No. 13. TUESDAY, May 1, 1750.

Commissumque teges et vino tortus et ira. HOR.

And let not wine or anger wrest
Th' intrusted secret from your breast. FRANCIS.

IT is related by Quintus Curtius, that the Persians always conceived an invincible contempt of a man who had violated the laws of secrecy; for they thought, that, however he might be deficient in the qualities requisite to actual excellence, the negative virtues at least were in his power, and though he perhaps could not speak well if he was to try, it was still easy for him not to speak.

In forming this opinion of the easiness of secrecy, they seem to have considered it as opposed, not to treachery, but loquacity, and to have conceived the man whom they thus censured, not frighted by menaces to reveal, or bribed by promises to betray, but incited by the mere pleasure of talking, or some other motive equally trifling, to lay open his heart without reflection, and to let whatever he knew slip from him, only for want of power to retain it. Whether, by their settled and avowed scorn of thoughtless talkers, the Persians were able to diffuse to any great extent the virtue of taciturnity, we are hindered by the distance of those times from being able to discover, there being very few memoirs remaining of the court of Persepolis, nor any distinct accounts handed down to us of their office-clerks, their ladies

of the bed-chamber, their attorneys, their chambermaids, or their footmen.

In these latter ages, though the old animosity against a prattler is still retained, it appears wholly to have lost its effect upon the conduct of mankind; for secrets are so seldom kept, that it may with some reason be doubted, whether the ancients were not mistaken in their first postulate, whether the quality of ret[illegible]ally bestowed, and whether a secret has not [illegible]ility, by which it escapes imperceptibly at [illegible], or some power of fermentation, by which it ex[illegible]f so as to burst the heart that will not give it [illegible]

Those that study [illegible] or the mind of man, very often find the most s[illegible]easing theory falling under the weight of contrary [illegible]; and, instead of gratifying their vanity by in[illegible]ng [illegible]ects from causes, they are always reduced at last to conjecture causes from effects. That it is easy to be secret, the speculatist can demonstrate in his retreat, and therefore thinks himself justified in placing confidence; the man of the world knows, that, whether difficult or not, it is uncommon, and therefore finds himself rather inclined to search after the reason of this universal failure in one of the most important duties of society.

The vanity of being known to be trusted with a secret is generally one of the chief motives to disclose it; for however absurd it may be thought to boast an honour by an act which shows that it was conferred without merit, yet most men seem rather inclined to confess the want of virtue than of importance, and more willingly show their influence, though at the expense of their probity, than glide through life with no other pleasure than the private consciousness of fidelity; which, while it is preserved, must be without praise, except from the single person who tries and knows it.

There are many ways of telling a secret, by which a man exempts himself from the reproaches of his conscience, and gratifies his pride, without suffering himself to believe that he impairs his virtue. He tells the private affairs of his patron, or his friend, only to those from whom he would not conceal his own; he tells them to those who have no temptation to betray the trust, or with a denunciation of a certain forfeiture of his friendship, if he discovers that they become public.

Secrets are very frequently told in the first ardour of kindness, or of love, for the sake of proving, by so important a sacrifice, sincerity or tenderness; but with this motive, though it be strong in itself, vanity concurs, since every man desires

to be most esteemed by those whom he loves, or with whom he converses, with whom he passes his hours of pleasure, and to whom he retires from business and from care.

When the discovery of secrets is under consideration, there is always a distinction carefully to be made between our own and those of another; those of which we are fully masters, as they affect only our own interest, and those which are reposited with us in trust, and involve the happiness or convenience of such as we have no right to expose to hazard. To tell our own secrets is generally folly, but that folly is without guilt; to communicate those with which we are intrusted is always treachery, and treachery for the most part combined with folly.

There have, indeed, been some enthusiastic and irrational zealots for friendship, who have maintained, and perhaps believed, that one friend has a right to all that is in possession of another; and that therefore it is a violation of kindness to exempt any secret from this boundless confidence. Accordingly a late female minister of state* has been shameless enough to inform the world, that she used, when she wanted to extract any thing from her sovereign, to remind her of Montaigne's reasoning, who has determined, that to tell a secret to a friend is no breach of fidelity, because the number of persons trusted is not multiplied, a man and his friend being virtually the same.

That such a fallacy could be imposed upon any human understanding, or that an author could have advanced a position so remote from truth and reason, any other ways than as a declaimer, to show to what extent he could stretch his imagination, and with what strength he could press his principle, would scarcely have been credible, had not this lady kindly shown us how far weakness may be deluded, or indolence amused. But since it appears, that even this sophistry has been able, with the help of a strong desire, to repose in quiet upon the understanding of another, to mislead honest intentions, and an understanding not contemptible,† it may not be superfluous to remark, that those things which are common among friends are only such as either possesses in his own right, and can alienate or destroy without injury to any other person. Without this limitation, confidence must run on without end, the second person may tell the secret to the third, upon the same principle as he received it from the first, and a third may hand it forward to a fourth, till at last

* Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough. C.
† That of Queen Anne. C.

it is told in the round of friendship to them from whom it was the first intention to conceal it.

The confidence which Caius has of the faithfulness of Titius is nothing more than an opinion which himself cannot know to be true, and which Claudius, who first tells his secret to Caius, may know to be false; and therefore the trust is transferred by Caius, if he reveal what has been told him, to one from whom the person originally concerned would have withheld it: and whatever may be the event, Caius has hazarded the happiness of his friend, without necessity and without permission, and has put that trust in the hand of fortune which was given only to virtue.

All the arguments upon which a man who is telling the private affairs of another may ground his confidence of security, he must upon reflection know to be uncertain, because he finds them without effect upon himself. When he is imagining that Titius will be cautious, from a regard to his interest, his reputation, or his duty, he ought to reflect that he is himself at that instant acting in opposition to all these reasons, and revealing what interest, reputation, and duty, direct him to conceal.

Every one feels that in his own case he should consider the man incapable of trust, who believed himself at liberty to tell whatever he knew to the first whom he should conclude deserving of his confidence; therefore Caius, in admitting Titius to the affairs imparted only to himself, must know that he violates his faith, since he acts contrary to the intention of Claudius, to whom that faith was given. For promises of friendship are, like all others, useless and vain, unless they are made in some known sense, adjusted and acknowledged by both parties.

I am not ignorant that many questions may be started relating to the duty of secrecy, where the affairs are of public concern; where subsequent reasons may arise to alter the appearance and nature of the trust; that the manner in which the secret was told may change the degree of obligation, and that the principles upon which a man is chosen for a confidant may not always equally constrain him. But these scruples, if not too intricate, are of too extensive consideration for my present purpose, nor are they such as generally occur in common life; and though casuistical knowledge be useful in proper hands, yet it ought by no means to be carelessly exposed, since most will use it rather to lull than to awaken their own consciences; and the threads of reasoning, on which truth is suspended, are frequently drawn to such subtility, that common eyes cannot perceive, and common sensibility cannot feel them.

The whole doctrine, as well as practice of secrecy, is so perplexing and dangerous, that next to him who is compelled to trust, I think him unhappy who is chosen to be trusted; for he is often involved in scruples without the liberty of calling in the help of any other understanding; he is frequently drawn into guilt, under the appearance of friendship and honesty; and sometimes subjected to suspicion by the treachery of others, who are engaged without his knowledge in the same schemes; for he that has one confidant has generally more, and when he is at last betrayed, is in doubt on whom he shall fix the crime.

The rules therefore that I shall propose concerning secrecy, and from which I think it not safe to deviate, without long and exact deliberation, are—Never to solicit the knowledge of a secret. Not willingly, nor without many limitations, to accept such confidence when it is offered. When a secret is once admitted, to consider the trust as of a very high nature, important as society, and sacred as truth, and therefore not to be violated for any incidental convenience, or slight appearance of contrary fitness.

No. 14. Saturday, May 5, 1750.

——Nil fuit unquam
Sic dispar sibi—— Hor.

Sure such a various creature ne'er was known. Francis.

Among the many inconsistencies which folly produces, or infirmity suffers, in the human mind, there has often been observed a manifest and striking contrariety between the life of an author and his writings; and Milton, in a letter to a learned stranger, by whom he had been visited, with great reason congratulates himself upon the consciousness of being found equal to his own character, and having preserved in a private and familiar interview, that reputation which his works had procured him.

Those whom the appearance of virtue, or the evidence of genius, have tempted to a nearer knowledge of the writer in whose performances they may be found, have indeed had frequent reason to repent their curiosity; the bubble that sparkled before them has become common water at the touch; the phantom of perfection has vanished when they wished to press it to their bosom. They have lost the pleasure of ima-

gining how far humanity may be exalted, and, perhaps, feel themselves less inclined to toil up the steeps of virtue, when they observe those who seem best able to point the way, loitering below, as either afraid of the labour, or doubtful of the reward.

It has been long the custom of the oriental monarchs to to hide themselves in gardens and palaces, to avoid the conversation of mankind, and to be known to their subjects only by their edicts. The same policy is no less necessary to him that writes, than to him that governs; for men would not more patiently submit to be taught, than commanded, by one known to have the same follies and weaknesses with themselves. A sudden intruder into the closet of an author would perhaps feel equal indignation with the officer, who having long solicited admission into the presence of Sardanapalus, saw him not consulting upon laws, inquiring into grievances, or modelling armies, but employed in feminine amusements, and directing the ladies in their work.

It is not difficult to conceive, however, that for many reasons a man writes much better than he lives. For without entering into refined speculations, it may be shown much easier to design than to perform. A man proposes his schemes of life in a state of abstraction and disengagement, exempt from the enticements of hope, the solicitations of affection, the importunities of appetite, or the depressions of fear, and is in the same state with him that teaches upon land the art of navigation, to whom the sea is always smooth, and the wind always prosperous.

The mathematicians are well acquainted with the difference between pure science which has to do only with ideas, and the application of its laws to the use of life, in which they are constrained to submit to the imperfection of matter, and the influence of accidents. Thus, in moral discussions, it is to be remembered that many impediments obstruct our practice, which very easily give way to theory. The speculatist is only in danger of erroneous reasoning; but the man involved in life, has his own passions, and those of others, to encounter, and is embarrassed with a thousand inconveniences: which confound him with variety of impulse, and either perplex or obstruct his way. He is forced to act without deliberation, and obliged to choose before he can examine: he is surprised by sudden alterations of the state of things, and changes his measures according to superficial appearances; he is led by others, either because he is indolent, or because he is timorous; he is sometimes afraid to

know what is right, and sometimes finds friends or enemies diligent to deceive him.

We are, therefore, not to wonder that most fail, amidst tumult, and snares, and danger, in the observance of those precepts, which they lay down in solitude, safety, and tranquillity, with a mind unbiassed, and with liberty unobstructed. It is the condition of our present state to see more than we can attain; the exactest vigilance and caution can never maintain a single day of unmingled innocence, much less can the utmost efforts of incorporated mind reach the summit of speculative virture.

It is, however, necessary for the idea of perfection to be proposed, that we may have some object to which our endeavours are to be directed; and he that is most deficient in the duties of life, makes some atonement for his faults, if he warns others against his own failings, and hinders, by the salubrity of his admonitions, the contagion of his example.

Nothing is more unjust, however common, than to charge with hypocrisy him that expresses zeal for those virtues which he neglects to practise: since he may be sincerely convinced of the advantages of conquering his passions, without having yet obtained the victory, as a man may be confident of the advantages of a voyage or a journey, without having courage or industry to undertake it, and may honestly recommend to others those attempts which he neglects himself.

The interest which the corrupt part of mankind have in hardening themselves against every motive of amendment, has disposed them to give to these contradictions, when they can be produced against the cause of virtue, that weight which they will not allow them in any other case. They see men act in opposition to their interest, without supposing that they do not know it: those who give way to the sudden violence of passion, and forsake the most important pursuits for petty pleasures, are not supposed to have changed their opinions, or to approve their own conduct. In moral or religious questions alone, they determine the sentiments by the actions, and charge every man with endeavouring to impose upon the world, whose writings are not confirmed by his life. They never consider that themselves neglect or practise something every day inconsistently with their own settled judgment, nor discover that the conduct of the advocates for virtue, can little increase or lessen the obligation of their dictates; argument is to be invalidated only by argument, and is in itself of the same force, whether or not it convinces him by whom it is proposed. Yet since this prejudice, however unreasonable, is always likely to have some prevalence, it is the duty

of every man to take care lest he should hinder the efficacy of his own instructions. When he desires to gain the belief of others, he should show that he believes himself; and when he teaches the fitness of virtue by his reasonings, he should, by his example, prove its possibility: thus much at least may be required of him, that he shall not act worse than others, because he writes better; nor imagine that, by the merit of his genius, he may claim indulgence beyond mortals of the lower classes, and be excused for want of prudence, or neglect of virtue.

Bacon, in his history of the winds, after having offered something to the imagination as desirable, often proposes lower advantages in its place to the reason as attainable. The same method may be sometimes pursued in moral endeavours, which this philosopher has observed in natural inquiries; having first set positive and absolute excellence before us, we may be pardoned though we sink down to humbler virtue, trying, however, to keep our point always in view, and struggling not to lose ground, though we cannot gain it.

It is recorded of Sir Matthew Hale, that he, for a long time, concealed the consecration of himself to the stricter duties of religion, lest, by some flagitious and shameful action, he should bring piety into disgrace. For the same reason, it may be prudent for a writer, who apprehends that he shall not enforce his own maxims by his domestic character, to conceal his name, that he may not injure them.

There are, indeed, a great number whose curiosity to gain a more familiar knowledge of successful writers, is not so much prompted by an opinion of their power to improve as to delight, and who expect from them not arguments against vice, or dissertations on temperance or justice, but flights of wit, and sallies of pleasantry, or, at least, acute remarks, nice distinctions, justness of sentiment, and elegance of diction.

This expectation is, indeed, specious and probable, and yet, such is the fate of all human hopes, that it is very often frustrated, and those who raise admiration by their books, disgust by their company. A man of letters for the most part spends, in the privacies of study, that season of life in which the manners are to be softened into ease, and polished into elegance; and when he has gained knowledge enough to be respected, has neglected the minuter acts by which he might have pleased. When he enters life, if his temper be soft and timorous, he is diffident and bashful, from the knowledge of his defects; or if he was born with spirit and resolution, he is ferocious and arrogant, from the consciousness

of his merit: he is either dissipated by the awe of company, and unable to recollect his reading, and arrange his arguments; or he is hot and dogmatical, quick in opposition, and tenacious in defence, disabled by his own violence and confused by his haste to triumph.

The graces of writing and conversation are of different kinds; and though he who excels in one might have been, with opportunities and application, equally successful in the other, yet as many please by extemporary talk, though utterly unacquainted with the more accurate method, and more laboured beauties, which composition requires; so it is very possible that men, wholly accustomed to works of study may be without that readiness of conception, and affluence of language, always necessary to colloquial entertainment. They may want address to watch the hints which conversation offers for the display of their particular attainments, or they may be so much unfurnished with matter on common subjects, that discourse not professedly literary, glides over them as heterogeneous bodies, without admitting their conceptions to mix in the circulation.

A transition from an author's book to his conversation, is too often like an entrance into a large city, after a distant prospect. Remotely, we see nothing but spires of temples and turrets of palaces, and imagine it the residence of splendour, grandeur, and magnificence; but when we have passed the gates, we find it perplexed with narrow passages, disgraced with despicable cottages, embarrassed with obstructions, and clouded with smoke.

No. 15. Tuesday, May 8, 1750.

Et quando uberior vitiorum copia? Quando
Major avaritiæ patuit sinus? Alea quando
Hos animos? Juv.

What age so large a crop of vices bore?
Or when was avarice extended more?
When were the dice with more profusion thrown? Dryden.

There is no grievance, public or private, of which, since I took upon me the office of a periodical monitor, I have received so many, or so earnest complaints, as of the predominance of play; of a fatal passion for cards and dice, which seems to have overturned, not only the ambition of excellence, but the desire of pleasure; to have extinguished the

flames of the lover, as well as of the patriot; and threatens in its further progress, to destroy all distinctions, both of rank and sex, to crush all emulation but that of fraud, to corrupt all those classes of our people whose ancestors have, by their virtue, their industry, or their parsimony, given them the power of living in extravagance, idleness, and vice, and to leave them without knowledge, but of the modish games, and without wishes but for lucky hands.

I have found, by long experience, that there are few enterprises so hopeless as contests with the fashion, in which the opponents are not only made confident by their numbers, and strong by their union, but are hardened by contempt of their antagonist, whom they always look upon as a wretch of low notions, contracted views, mean conversation, and narrow fortune, who envies the elevations which he cannot reach, who would gladly imbitter the happiness which his inelegance, or indigence deny him to partake, and who has no other end in his advice than to revenge his own mortification by hindering those whom their birth and taste have set above him, from the enjoyment of their superiority, and bringing them down to a level with himself.

Though I have never found myself much affected by this formidable censure, which I have incurred often enough to be acquainted with its full force, yet I shall, in some measure, obviate it on this occasion, by offering very little in my own name, either of argument or entreaty, since those who suffer by this general infatuation may be supposed best able to relate its effects.

Sir—There seems to be so little knowledge left in the world, and so little of that reflection practised by which knowledge is to be gained, that I am in doubt, whether I shall be understood, when I complain of want of opportunity for thinking; or whether a condemnation, which at present seems irreversible, to perpetual ignorance, will raise any compassion, either in you or your readers: yet I will venture to lay my state before you, because I believe it is natural to most minds, to take some pleasure in complaining of evils, of which they have no reason to be ashamed.

I am the daughter of a man of great fortune, whose diffidence of mankind, and, perhaps the pleasure of continual accumulation, incline him to reside upon his own estate, and to educate his children in his own house, where I was bred, if not with the most brilliant examples of virtue before my eyes, at least remote enough from any incitements to vice; and wanting neither leisure nor books, nor the acquaintance of

some persons of learning in the neighbourhood, I endeavoured to acquire such knowledge as might most recommend me to esteem, and thought myself able to support a conversation upon most of the subjects which my sex and condition made it proper for me to understand.

I had, besides my knowledge, as my mamma and my maid told me, a very fine face, and elegant shape, and with all these advantages had been seventeen months the reigning toast for twelve miles round, and never came to the monthly assembly, but I heard the old ladies that sat by wishing that *it might end well*, and their daughters criticising my air, my features, or my dress.

You know, Mr. Rambler, that ambition is natural to youth, and curiosity to understanding, and therefore will hear, without wonder, that I was desirous to extend my victories over those who might give more honour to the conqueror; and that I found in a country life a continual repetition of the same pleasures, which was not sufficient to fill up the mind for the present, or raise any expectations of the future; and I will confess to you, that I was impatient for a sight of the town, and filled my thoughts with the discoveries which I should make, the triumphs that I should obtain, and the praises that I should receive.

At last the time came. My aunt, whose husband has a seat in parliament, and a place at court, buried her only child, and sent for me to supply the loss. The hope that I should so far insinuate myself into their favour, as to obtain a considerable augmentation to my fortune, procured me every convenience for my departure, with great expedition; and I could not, amidst all my transports, forbear some indignation to see with what readiness the natural guardians of my virtue sold me to a state, which they thought more hazardous than it really was, as soon as a new accession of fortune glittered in their eyes.

Three days I was upon the road, and on the fourth morning my heart danced at the sight of London. I was set down at my aunt's, and entered upon the scene of action. I expected now, from the age and experience of my aunt, some prudential lessons; but, after the first civilities and first tears were over, was told what a pity it was to have kept so fine a girl so long in the country; for the people who did not begin young, seldom dealt their cards handsomely, or played them tolerably.

Young persons are commonly inclined to slight the remarks and counsels of their elders. I smiled, perhaps, with too much contempt, and was upon the point of telling her that

my time had not been past in such trivial attainments. But I soon found that things are to be estimated, not by the importance of their effects, but the frequency of their use.

A few days after, my aunt gave me notice, that some company, which she had been six weeks in collecting, was to meet that evening, and she expected a finer assembly than had been seen all the winter. She expressed this in the jargon of a gamester, and, when I asked an explication of her terms of art, wondered where I had lived. I had already found my aunt so incapable of any rational conclusion, and so ignorant of every thing, whether great or little, that I had lost all regard to her opinion, and dressed myself with great expectations of an opportunity to display my charms among rivals, whose competition would not dishonour me. The company came in, and after the cursory compliments of salutation, alike easy to the lowest and the highest understanding, what was the result? The cards were broke open, the parties were formed, the whole night passed in a game, upon which the young and old were equally employed; nor was I able to attract an eye, or gain an ear, but being compelled to play without skill, I perpetually embarrassed my partner, and soon perceived the contempt of the whole table gathering upon me.

I cannot but suspect, Sir, that this odious fashion is produced by a conspiracy of the old, the ugly, and the ignorant, against the young and beautiful, the witty and the gay, as a contrivance to level all distinctions of nature and art, to confound the world in a chaos of folly, to take from those who could outshine them all the advantages of mind and body, to withhold youth from its natural pleasures, deprive wit of its influence, and beauty of its charms, to fix those hearts upon money, to which love has hitherto been entitled, to sink life into a tedious uniformity, and to allow it no other hopes or fears, but those of robbing and being robbed.

Be pleased, Sir, to inform those of my sex who have minds capable of nobler sentiments, that, if they will unite in vindication of their pleasures and their prerogatives, they may fix a time, at which cards shall cease to be in fashion, or be left only to those who have neither beauty to be loved, nor spirit to be feared; neither knowledge to teach, nor modesty to learn; and who, having passed their youth in vice, are justly condemned to spend their age in folly.

I am, Sir, &c.

CLEORA.

Sir—Vexation will burst my heart, if I do not give it vent. As you publish a paper, I insist upon it that you insert this in your next, as ever you hope for the kindness and encouragement of any woman of taste, spirit, and virtue. I would have it published to the world, how deserving wives are used by imperious coxcombs, that henceforth no woman may marry who has not the patience of Grizzel. Nay, if even Grizzel had been married to a gamester, her temper would never have held out. A wretch that loses his good-humour and humanity along with his money, and will not allow enough from his own extravagances to support a woman of fashion in the necessary amusements of life!—Why does not he employ his wise head to make a figure in parliament, raise an estate, and get a title? That would be fitter for the master of a family, than rattling a nasty dice-box; and then he might indulge his wife in a few slight expenses and elegant diversions.

What if I was unfortunate at brag?—should he not have stayed to see how luck would turn another time? Instead of that, what does he do, but picks a quarrel, upbraids me with loss of beauty, abuses my acquaintance, ridicules my play, and insults my understanding; says, forsooth, that women have not heads enough to play with any thing but dolls, and that they should be employed in things proportionable to their understanding, keep at home, and mind family affairs.

I do stay at home, Sir, and all the world knows I am at home every Sunday. I have had six routes this winter, and sent out ten packs of cards in invitations to private parties. As for management, I am sure he cannot call me extravagant, or say I do not mind my family. The children are out at nurse in villages as cheap as any two little brats can be kept, nor have I ever seen them since; so he has no trouble about them. The servants live at board wages. My own dinners come from the Thatched House; and I have never paid a penny for any thing I have bought since I was married. As for play, I do think I may, indeed, indulge in that, now I am my own mistress. Papa made me drudge at whist till I was tired of it; and, far from wanting a head, Mr. Hoyle, when he had not given me above forty lessons, said I was one of his best scholars. I thought then with myself, that, if once I was at liberty, I would leave play and take to reading romances, things so forbidden at our house, and so railed at, that it was impossible not to fancy them very charming. Most unfortunately, to save me from absolute undutifulness, just as I was married, came dear brag into

fashion, and ever since it has been the joy of my life; so easy, so cheerful and careless, so void of thought, and so genteel! Who can help loving it? Yet the perfidious thing has used me very ill of late, and to-morrow I should have changed it for faro. But oh! this detestable to-morrow, a thing always expected, and never found.—Within these few hours must I be dragged into the country. The wretch, Sir, left me in a fit, which his threatenings had occasioned, and unmercifully ordered a post-chaise. Stay I cannot, for money I have none, and credit I cannot get.—But I will make the monkey play with me at picquet upon the road for all I want. I am almost sure to beat him, and his debts of honour I know he will pay. Then who can tell but I may still come back and conquer lady Packer? Sir, you need not print this last scheme, and, upon second thoughts, you may.——Oh, distraction! the post-chaise is at the door. Sir, publish what you will, only let it be printed without a name.

No. 16. Saturday, May 12, 1750.

——— *Multis dicendi copia torrens,*
Et sua mortifera est facundia——— Juv.

Some who the depths of eloquence have found,
In that unnavigable stream were drown'd. Dryden.

Sir—I am the modest young man whom you favoured with your advice, in a late paper; and, as I am very far from suspecting that you foresaw the numberless inconveniencies which I have, by following it, brought upon myself, I will lay my condition open before you, for you seem bound to extricate me from the perplexities in which your counsel, however innocent in the intention, has contributed to involve me.

You told me, as you thought, to my comfort, that a writer might easily find means of introducing his genius to the world, for the *presses of England were open*. This I have now fatally experienced; the press is, indeed, open.

——— *Facilis descensus Averni.*
Noctes atque dies patet atri janua Ditis. Juv.

The gates of hell are open night and day;
Smooth the descent, and easy is the way. Dryden.

The means of doing hurt to ourselves are always at hand. I immediately sent to a printer, and contracted with him for

an impression of several thousands of my pamphlet. While it was at the press, I was seldom absent from the printing-house, and continually urged the workmen to haste, by solicitations, promises and rewards. From the day all other pleasures were excluded, by the delightful employment of correcting the sheets; and from the night, sleep generally was banished, by anticipations of the happiness which every hour was bringing near.

At last the time of publication approached, and my heart beat with the raptures of an author. I was above all little precautions, and in defiance of envy or of criticism, set my name upon the title, without sufficiently considering, that what has once passed the press is irrevocable, and that though the printing-house may properly be compared to the infernal regions, for the facility of its entrance, and the difficulty with which authors return from it; yet there is this difference, that a great genius can never return to his former state, by a happy draught of the waters of oblivion.

I am now, Mr. Rambler, known to be an author, and am condemned, irreversibly condemned, to all the miseries of high reputation. The first morning after publication my friends assembled about me; I presented each, as is usual, with a copy of my book. They looked into the first pages, but were hindered, by their admiration, from reading further. The first pages are, indeed, very elaborate. Some passages they particularly dwelt upon, as more eminently beautiful than the rest; and some delicate strokes, and secret elegances, I pointed out to them, which had escaped their observation. I then begged of them to forbear their compliments, and invited them, I could do no less, to dine with me at a tavern. After dinner, the book was resumed; but their praises very often so much overpowered my modesty, that I was forced to put about the glass, and had often no means of repressing the clamours of their admiration, but by thundering to the drawer for another bottle.

Next morning another set of my acquaintance congratulated me upon my performance, with such importunity of praise, that I was again forced to obviate their civilities by a treat. On the third day, I had yet a greater number of applauders to put to silence in the same manner; and, on the fourth, those whom I had entertained the first day came again, having, in the perusal of the remaining part of the book, discovered so many forcible sentences and masterly touches, that it was impossible for me to bear the repetition of their commendations. I therefore persuaded them once more to adjourn to the tavern, and choose some other subject, on which

I might share in their conversation. But it was not in their power to withhold their attention from my performance, which had so entirely taken possession of their minds, that no entreaties of mine could change their topic, and I was obliged to stifle, with claret, that praise which neither my modesty could hinder, nor my uneasiness repress.

The whole week was thus spent in a kind of literary revel, and I have now found that nothing is so expensive as great abilities, unless there is joined with them an insatiable eagerness of praise; for to escape from the pain of hearing myself exalted above the greatest names, dead and living, of the learned world, it has already cost me two hogsheads of port, fifteen gallons of arrack, ten dozen of claret, and five-and-forty bottles of champagne.

I was resolved to stay at home no longer, and therefore rose early and went to the coffee-house; but found that I had now made myself too eminent for happiness, and that I was no longer to enjoy the pleasure of mixing, upon equal terms, with the rest of the world. As soon as I enter the room, I see part of the company raging with envy, which they endeavour to conceal, sometimes with the appearance of laughter, and sometimes with that of contempt; but the disguise is such that I can discover the secret rancour of their hearts; and as envy is deservedly its own punishment, I frequently indulge myself in tormenting them with my presence.

But though there may be some slight satisfaction received from the mortification of my enemies, yet my benevolence will not suffer me to take any pleasure in the terrors of my friends. I have been cautious, since the appearance of my work, not to give myself more premeditated airs of superiority, than the most rigid humility might allow. It is, indeed, not impossible that I may sometimes have laid down my opinion, in a manner that showed a consciousness of my ability to maintain it, or interrupted the conversation, when I saw its tendency, without suffering the speaker to waste his time in explaining his sentiments; and, indeed, I did indulge myself for two days in a custom of drumming with my fingers, when the company began to lose themselves in absurdities, or to encroach upon subjects which I knew them unqualified to discuss. But I generally acted with great appearance of respect, even to those whose stupidity I pitied in my heart. Yet, notwithstanding this exemplary moderation, so universal is the dread of uncommon powers, and such the unwillingness of mankind to be made wiser, that I have now for some days found myself shunned by all my acquaintance. If I knock at a door, no body is at home; if I enter a coffee-house, I have

the box to myself. I live in the town like a lion in his desert, or an eagle on his rock, too great for friendship or society, and condemned to solitude by unhappy elevation and dreaded ascendency.

Nor is my character only formidable to others, but burdensome to myself. I naturally love to talk without much thinking, to scatter my merriment at random, and to relax my thoughts with ludicrous remarks and fanciful images; but such is now the importance of my opinion, that I am afraid to offer it, lest, by being established too hastily into a maxim, it should be the occasion of error to half the nation; and such is the expectation with which I am attended when I am going to speak, that I frequently pause to reflect whether what I am about to utter is worthy of myself.

This Sir, is sufficiently miserable; but there are still greater calamities behind. You must have read in Pope and Swift how men of parts have had their closets rifled, and their cabinets broke open, at the instigation of piratical booksellers, for the profit of their works; and it is apparent that there are many prints now sold in the shops, of men whom you cannot suspect of sitting for that purpose, and whose likenesses must have been certainly stolen when their names made their faces vendible. These considerations at first put me on my guard, and I have, indeed, found sufficient reason for my caution, for I have discovered many people examining my countenance, with a curiosity that showed their intention to draw it; I immediately left the house, but find the same behaviour in another.

Others may be persecuted, but I am haunted; I have good reason to believe that eleven painters are now dogging me, for they know that he who can get my face first will make his fortune. I often change my wig, and wear my hat over my eyes, by which I hope somewhat to confound them; for you know it is not fair to sell my face, without admitting me to share the profit.

I am, however, not so much in pain for my face as for my papers, which I dare neither carry with me nor leave behind. I have, indeed, taken some measures for their preservation, having put them in an iron chest, and fixed a padlock upon my closet. I change my lodgings five times a week, and always remove at the dead of night.

Thus I live, in consequence of having given too great proofs of a predominant genius, in the solitude of a hermit, with the anxiety of a miser, and the caution of an outlaw; afraid to show my face lest it should be copied; afraid to speak, lest I should injure my character; and to write, lest

my correspondents should publish my letters; always uneasy, lest my servants should steal my papers for the sake of money, or my friends for that of the public. This it is to soar above the rest of mankind; and this representation I lay before you, that I may be informed how to divest myself of the laurels which are so cumbersome to the wearer, and descend to the enjoyment of that quiet, from which I find a writer of the first class so fatally debarred.

MISELLUS.

No. 17. TUESDAY, May 15, 1750.

——Me non oracula certum,
Sed mors certa facit. LUCAN.

Let those weak minds, who live in doubt and fear,
To juggling priests for oracles repair;
One certain hour of death to each decreed,
My fixt, my certain soul, from doubt has freed. ROWE.

IT is recorded of some eastern monarch, that he kept an officer in his house, whose employment it was to remind him of his mortality, by calling out every morning, at a stated hour, *Remember, prince. that thou shalt die!* And the contemplation of the frailness and uncertainty of our present state appeared of so much importance to Solon of Athens, that he left this precept to future ages; *Keep thine eye fixed upon the end of life.*

A frequent and attentive prospect of that moment, which must put a period to all our schemes, and deprive us of all our acquisitions, is indeed of the utmost efficacy to the just and rational regulation of our lives; nor would ever any thing wicked, or often any thing absurd, be undertaken or prosecuted by him who should begin every day with a serious reflection that he is born to die.

The disturbers of our happiness, in this world, are our desires, our griefs, and our fears; and to all these, the consideration of mortality is a certain and adequate remedy. Think, says Epictetus, frequently on poverty, banishment, and death, and thou wilt then never indulge violent desires, or give up thy heart to mean sentiments οὐδὲμ οὐδέποτε ταπεινῶν ἐνθυμήσῃ, οὔτε ἄγαν ἐπιθυμήσεις τινός.

That the maxim of Epictetus is founded on just observation will easily be granted, when we reflect, how that vehemence of eagerness after the common objects of pursuit is

led in our minds. We represent to ourselves the plea-
s of some future possession, and suffer our thoughts to
ll attentively upon it, till it has wholly engrossed the
gination. and permits us not to conceive any happiness
its attainment, or any misery but its loss; every other
faction which the bounty of Providence has scattered
life is neglected as inconsiderable, in comparison of the
t object which we have placed before us, and is thrown
us as encumbering our activity, or trampled under foot
tanding in our way.

very man has experienced how much of this ardour has
remitted, when a sharp or tedious sickness has set death
re his eyes. The extensive influence of greatness, the
er of wealth, the praises of admirers, and the attendance
pplicants, have appeared vain and empty things, when
last hour seemed to be approaching; and the same ap-
ance they would always have, if the same thought was
ys predominant. We should then find the absurdity of
tching out our arms incessantly to grasp that which we
not keep, and wearing out our lives in endeavours to add
turrets to the fabric of ambition, when the foundation
f is shaking, and the ground on which it stands is mould-
g away.

ll envy is proportionate to desire; we are uneasy at the
inments of another, according as we think our own hap-
ss would be advanced by the addition of that which he
holds from us; and therefore whatever depresses immo-
te wishes, will, at the same time, set the heart free from
corrosion of envy, and exempt us from that vice, which
bove most others, tormenting to ourselves, hateful to the
ld, and productive of mean artifices, and sordid projects.

hat considers how soon he must close his life, will find
ing of so much importance as to close it well; and will,
efore, look with indifference upon whatever is useless to
purpose. Whoever reflects frequently upon the uncer-
ty of his own duration, will find out, that the state of
rs is not more permanent, and that what can confer
ing on himself very desirable, cannot so much improve
condition of a rival, as to make him much superior to
e from whom he has carried the prize, a prize too mean
eserve a very obstinate opposition.

ven grief, that passion to which the virtuous and tender
d is particularly subject, will be obviated or alleviated by
same thoughts. It will be obviated, if all the blessings
ur condition are enjoyed with a constant sense of this un-
ain tenure. If we remember, that whatever we possess

is to be in our hands but a very little time, and that the little which our most lively hopes can promise us, may be made less by ten thousand accidents; we shall not much repine at a loss, of which we cannot estimate the value, but of which, though we are not able to tell the least amount, we know, with sufficient certainty, the greatest, and are convinced that the greatest is not much to be regretted.

But, if any passion has so much usurped our understanding, as not to suffer us to enjoy advantages with the moderation prescribed by reason, it is not too late to apply this remedy, when we find ourselves sinking under sorrow, and inclined to pine for that which is irrecoverably vanished. We may then usefully revolve the uncertainty of our own condition, and the folly of lamenting that from which, if it had stayed a little longer, we should ourselves have been taken away.

With regard to the sharpest and most melting sorrow, that which arises from the loss of those whom we have loved with tenderness, it may be observed, that friendship between mortals can be contracted on no other terms, than that one must some time mourn for the other's death: And this grief will always yield to the survivor one consolation proportionate to his affliction; for the pain, whatever it be, that he himself feels, his friend has escaped.

Nor is fear, the most overbearing and resistless of all our passions, less to be tempered by this universal medicine of the mind. The frequent contemplation of death, as it shows the vanity of all human good, discovers likewise the lightness of all terrestrial evil, which certainly can last no longer than the subject upon which it acts; and according to the old observation, must be shorter, as it is more violent. The most cruel calamity which misfortune can produce, must, by the necessity of nature, be quickly at an end. The soul cannot long be held in prison, but will fly away, and leave a lifeless body to human malice.

——*Ridetque sui ludibria trunci.*

And soaring mocks the broken frame below.

The utmost that we can threaten to one another is that death, which, indeed, we may precipitate, but cannot retard, and from which, therefore, it cannot become a wise man to buy a reprieve at the expense of virtue, since he knows not how small a portion of time he can purchase, but knows, that whether short or long, it will be made less valuable by the remembrance of the price at which it has been obtained.—He *is sure* that he destroys his happiness, but is not sure that he *lengthens* his life.

The known shortness of life, as it ought to moderate our passions, may likewise, with equal propriety, contract our designs. There is not time for the most forcible genius, and most active industry, to extend its effects beyond a certain sphere. To project the conquest of the world, is the madness of mighty princes; to hope for excellence in every science, has been the folly of literary heroes; and both have found at last, that they have panted for a height of eminence denied to humanity, and have lost many opportunities of making themselves useful and happy, by a vain ambition of obtaining a species of honour, which the eternal laws of Providence have placed beyond the reach of man.

The miscarriages of the great designs of princes are recorded in the histories of the world, but are of little use to the bulk of mankind, who seem very little interested in admonitions against errors which they cannot commit. But the fate of learned ambition is a proper subject for every scholar to consider; for who has not had occasion to regret the dissipation of great abilities in a boundless multiplicity of pursuits, to lament the sudden desertion of excellent designs, upon the offer of some other subject made inviting by its novelty, and to observe the inaccuracies and deficiencies of works left unfinished by too great an extension of the plan?

It is always pleasing to observe, how much more our minds can conceive, than our bodies can perform! yet it is our duty, while we continue in this complicated state, to regulate one part of our composition by some regard to the other. We are not to indulge our corporeal appetites with pleasures that impair our intellectual vigour, nor gratify our minds with schemes which we know our lives must fail in attempting to execute. The uncertainty of our duration ought at once to set bounds to our designs, and add incitements to our industry; and when we find ourselves inclined either to immensity in our schemes, or sluggishness in our endeavours, we may either check, or animate ourselves, by recollecting with the father of physic, *that art is long, and life is short.*

No. 18. Saturday, May 19, 1750.

Illic matre carentibus,
Privignis mulier temperat innocens,
Nec dotata regit virum
Conjunx, nec nitido fidit adultero:
Dos est magna parentum
Virtus, et metuens alterius tori
Certo fœdere castitas. Hor.

Not there the guiltless step-dame knows
The baleful draught for orphans to compose;
No wife high portion'd rules her spouse,
Or trusts her essenc'd lover's faithless vows:
The lovers there for dow'ry claim
The father's virtue, and the spotless fame,
Which dares not break the nuptial tie. Francis.

There is no observation more frequently made by such as employ themselves in surveying the conduct of mankind, than that marriage, though the dictate of nature, and the institution of Providence, is yet very often the cause of misery, and that those who enter into that state can seldom forbear to express their repentance, and their envy of those whom either chance or caution hath withheld from it.

This general unhappiness has given occasion to many sage maxims among the serious, and smart remarks among the gay; the moralist and the writer of epigrams have equally thrown their abilities upon it; some have lamented, and some have ridiculed it; but as the faculty of writing has been chiefly a masculine endowment, the reproach of making the world miserable has been always thrown upon the women, and the grave and the merry have equally thought themselves at liberty to conclude either with declamatory complaints, or satirical censures, of female folly or fickleness, ambition or cruelty, extravagance or lust.

Led by such a number of examples, and incited by my share in the common interest, I sometimes venture to consider this universal grievance, having endeavoured to devest my heart of all partiality, and place myself as a kind of neutral being between the sexes, whose clamours being equally vented on both sides, with all the vehemence of distress, all the apparent confidence of justice, and all the indignation of injured virtue, seem entitled to equal regard. The men have, indeed, by their superiority of writing, been able to collect the evidence of many ages, and raise prejudices in their favour by the venerable testimonies of philosophers, historians, and

poets, but the pleas of the ladies appeal to passions of more forcible operation than the reverence of antiquity. If they have not so great names on their side, they have stronger arguments; it is to little purpose, that Socrates, or Euripides, are produced against the sighs of softness, and the tears of beauty. The most frigid and inexorable judge would at last stand suspended between equal powers, as Lucan was perplexed in the determination of the cause, where the deities were on one side, and Cato on the other.

But I, who have long studied the severest and most abstracted philosophy, have now in the cool maturity of life, arrived at such command over my passions, that I can hear the vociferations of either sex without catching any of the fire from those that utter them. For I have found, by long experience, that a man will sometimes rage at his wife, when in reality his mistress has offended him; and a lady complain of the cruelty of her husband, when she has no other enemy than bad cards. I do not suffer myself to be any longer imposed upon by oaths on one side, or fits on the other; nor when the husband hastens to the tavern, and the lady retires to her closet, am I always confident that they are driven by their miseries; since I have sometimes reason to believe, that they purpose not so much to sooth their sorrows, as to animate their fury. But how little credit soever may be given to particular accusations, the general accumulation of the charge shows, with too much evidence, that married persons are not very often advanced in felicity; and, therefore, it may be proper to examine at what avenues so many evils have made their way into the world. With this purpose, I have reviewed the lives of my friends, who have been least successful in connubial contracts, and attentively considered by what motives they were incited to marry, and by what principles they regulated their choice.

One of the first of my acquaintances that resolved to quit the unsettled thoughtless condition of a bachelor, was Prudentius, a man of slow parts, but not without knowledge or judgment in things which he had leisure to consider gradually before he determined them. Whenever we met at a tavern, it was his province to settle the scheme of our entertainment, contract with the cook, and inform us when we had called for wine to the sum originally proposed. This grave considerer found, by deep meditation, that a man was no loser by marrying early, even though he contented himself with a less fortune; for estimating the exact worth of annuities, he found that considering the constant diminution of the value of life, with the probable fall of the interest of money, it was not

worse to have ten thousand pounds at the age of two and twenty years, than a much larger fortune at thirty; for many opportunities, says he, occur of improving money, which if a man misses, he may not afterwards recover.

Full of these reflections, he threw his eyes about him, not in search of beauty or elegance, dignity or understanding, but of a woman with ten thousand pounds. Such a woman, in a wealthy part of t[illegible] as not very difficult to find; and by artful m[illegible] [illegible]er father, whose ambition was to make his [illegible] woman, my friend got her, as he boasted to [illegible] wo days after his marriage, for a settlement se[illegible] [illegible]ounds a year less than her fortune might ha[illegible] less than he would himself have given, if the [illegible]s [illegible] ut wise enough to delay the bargain.

Thus, at once delighted [illegible] [illegible]e superiority of his parts and the augmentation of his [illegible] [illegible]e, he carried Furia to his own house, in which he never afterwards enjoyed one hour of happiness. For Furia was a wretch of mean intellects, violent passions, a strong voice, and low education, without any sense of happiness but that which consisted in eating and counting money. Furia was a scold. They agreed in the desire of wealth, but with this difference, that Prudentius, was for growing rich by gain, Furia by parsimony. Prudentius would venture his money with chances very much in his favour; but Furia very wisely observing, that what they had was, while they had it, *their own*, thought all traffic too great a hazard, and was for putting it out at low interest, upon good security. Prudentius ventured, however, to ensure a ship at a very unreasonable price, but happening to lose his money, was so tormented with the clamours of his wife, that he never durst try a second experiment. He has now grovelled seven and forty years under Furia's direction, who never once mentioned him, since his bad luck, by any other name than that of *the ensurer*.

The next that married from our society was Florentius. He happened to see Zephyretta in a chariot at a horse-race, danced with her at night, was confirmed in his first ardour, waited on her next morning, and declared himself her lover. Florentius had not knowledge enough of the world, to distinguish between the flutter of coquetry and the sprightliness of wit, or between the smile of allurement and that of cheerfulness. He was soon awaked from his rapture, by conviction that his pleasure was but the pleasure of a day. Zephyretta had in four and twenty hours spent her stock of repartee, gone round the circle of her airs, and had nothing remaining for

him but childish insipidity, or for herself, but the practice of the same artifices upon new men.

Melissus was a man of parts, capable of enjoying and of improving life. He had passed through the various scenes of gaiety with that indifference and possession of himself, natural to men who have something higher and nobler in their prospect. Retiring to spend the summer in a village little frequented, he happened to lodge in the same house with Ianthe, and was unavoidably drawn to some acquaintance, which her wit and politeness soon invited him to improve. Having no opportunity of any other company, they were always together; and as they owed their pleasures to each other, they began to forget that any pleasure was enjoyed before their meeting. Melissus, from being delighted with her company, quickly began to be uneasy in her absence, and being sufficiently convinced of the force of her understanding, and finding, as he imagined, such a conformity of temper as declared them formed for each other, addressed her as a lover, after no very long courtship obtained her for his wife, and brought her next winter to town in triumph.

Now began their infelicity. Melissus had only seen her in one scene, where there was no variety of objects to produce the proper excitements to contrary desires. They had both loved solitude and reflection, where there was nothing but solitude and reflection to be loved; but when they came into public life, Ianthe discovered those passions which accident rather than hypocrisy had hitherto concealed. She was, indeed, not without the power of thinking, but was wholly without the exertion of that power, when either gaiety or splendour played on her imagination. She was expensive in her diversions, vehement in her passions, insatiate of pleasure, however dangerous to her reputation, and eager of applause, by whomsoever it might be given. This was the wife which Melissus the philosopher found in his retirement, and from whom he expected an associate in his studies, and an assistant to his virtues.

Prosapius, upon the death of his younger brother, that the family might not be extinct, married his housekeeper, and has ever since been complaining to his friends, that mean notions are instilled into his children, that he is ashamed to sit at his own table, and that his house is uneasy to him for want of suitable companions.

Avaro, master of a very large estate, took a woman of bad reputation, recommended to him by a rich uncle, who made that marriage the condition on which he should be his heir. Avaro now wonders to perceive his own fortune, his wife's

and his uncle's, insufficient to give him that happiness which is to be found only with a woman of virtue.

I intend to treat in more papers on this important article of life, and shall, therefore, make no reflection upon these histories, except that all whom I have mentioned failed to obtain happiness, for want of considering that marriage is the strictest tie of perpetual friendship; that there can be no friendship with[illegible] nd no confidence without integrity; and t[illegible] to be wretched, who pays to beauty, riches, [illegible] at regard which only virtue and piety can [illegible]

No. 19. Tuesday, May 22, 1750.

Dum te causidicum, dum te modo rhetora fingis,
Et non decernis, Taure, *quid esse velis,*
Peleos et Priami *transit, vel* Nestoris *ætas,*
Et serum fuerat jam tibi desinere.——
Eja, age, rumpe moras, quo te spectabimus usque?
Dum quid sis dubitas, potes esse nihil. Mart.

To rhetoric now, and now to law inclin'd,
Uncertain where to fix thy changing mind:
Old *Priam's* age or *Nestor's* may be out,
And thou, O *Taurus!* still go on in doubt.
Come then, how long such wavering shall we see?
Thou may'st doubt on: thou now can'st nothing be.
F. Lewis.

It is never without very melancholy reflections, that we can observe the misconduct, or miscarriage, of those men, who seem, by the force of understanding, or extent of knowledge, exempted from the general frailties of human nature, and privileged from the common infelicities of life. Though the world is crowded with scenes of calamity, we look upon the general mass of wretchedness with very little regard, and fix our eyes upon the state of particular persons, whom the eminence of their qualities marks out from the multitude; as in reading an account of a battle, we seldom reflect on the vulgar heaps of slaughter, but follow the hero with our whole attention, through all the varieties of his fortune, without a thought of the thousands that are falling round him.

With the same kind of anxious veneration I have for [illegible] years been making observations on the life of Polyphil[illegible] man whom all his acquaintances have, from his first [illegible]ance in the world, feared for the quickness of his discer[illegible] and admired for the multiplicity of his attainments, but w[illegible]

progress in life, and usefulness to mankind, has been hindered by the superfluity of his knowledge, and the celerity of his mind.

Polyphilus was remarkable at the school, for surpassing all his companions, without any visible application, and at the university was distinguished equally for his successful progress, as well through the thorny mazes of science, as the flowery path of politer literature, without any strict confinement to hours of study, or remarkable forbearance of the common amusements of young men.

When Polyphilus was at the age in which men usually choose their profession, and prepare to enter into a public character, every academical eye was fixed upon him; all were curious to inquire what this universal genius would fix upon for the employment of his life; and no doubt was made but that he would leave all his contemporaries behind him, and mount to the highest honours of that class in which he should enlist himself, without those delays and pauses which must be endured by meaner abilities.

Polyphilus, though by no means insolent or assuming, had been sufficiently encouraged, by uninterrupted success, to place great confidence in his own parts; and was not below his companions in the indulgence of his hopes, and expectations of the astonishment with which the world would be struck, when first his lustre should break out upon it: nor could he forbear (for whom does not constant flattery intoxicate?) to join sometimes in the mirth of his friends, at the sudden disappearance of those, who, having shone awhile, and drawn the eyes of the public upon their feeble radiance, were now doomed to fade away before him.

It is natural for a man to catch advantageous notions of the condition which those with whom he converses are striving to attain. Polyphilus, in a ramble to London, fell accidentally among the physicians, and was so much pleased with the prospect of turning philosophy to profit, and so highly delighted with a new theory of fevers which darted into his imagination, and which, after having considered it a few hours, he found himself able to maintain against all the advocates for the ancient system, that he resolved to apply himself to anatomy, botany, and chemistry, and to leave no part unconquered, either of the animal, mineral, or vegetable kingdoms.

He therefore read authors, constructed systems, and tried experiments; but, unhappily, as he was going to see a new plant in flower at Chelsea, he met, in crossing Westminster to take water, the chancellor's coach; he had the curiosity

to follow him into the hall, where a remarkable cause happened to be tried, and found himself able to produce so many arguments, which the lawyers had omitted on both sides, that he determined to quit physic for a profession in which he found it would be so easy to excel, and which promised higher honours, and larger profits, without melancholy attendance upon misery, mean submission to peevishness, and continual interruption of rest and pleasure.

He immediately took chambers in the Temple, bought a common-place book, and confined himself for some months to the perusal of the statutes, year-books, pleadings, and reports; he was a constant hearer of the courts, and began to put cases with reasonable accuracy. But he soon discovered, by considering the fortune of lawyers, that preferment was not to be got by acuteness, learning, and eloquence. He was perplexed by the absurdities of attorneys, and misrepresentations made by his clients of their own causes, by the useless anxiety of one, and the incessant importunity of another; he began to repent of having devoted himself to a study, which was so narrow in its comprehension, that it could never carry his name to any other country, and thought it unworthy of a man of parts to sell his life only for money. The barrenness of his fellow-students forced him generally into other company at his hours of entertainment, and among the varieties of conversation through which his curiosity was daily wandering, he, by chance, mingled at a tavern with some intelligent officers of the army. A man of letters was easily dazzled with the gaiety of their appearance, and softened into kindness by the politeness of their address; he, therefore, cultivated this new acquaintance, and when he saw how readily they found in every place admission and regard, and how familiarly they mingled with every rank and order of men, he began to feel his heart beat for military honours, and wondered how the prejudices of the university should make him so long insensible of that ambition, which has fired so many hearts in every age, and negligent of that calling, which is, above all others, universally and invariably illustrious, and which gives, even to the exterior appearance of its professors, a dignity and freedom unknown to the rest of mankind.

These favourable impressions were made still deeper by his conversation with ladies, whose regard for soldiers he could not observe, without wishing himself one of that happy fraternity, to which the female world seemed to have devoted their charms and their kindness. The love of knowledge, which was still his predominant inclination, was gratified by the recital of adventures, and accounts of foreign countries;

and therefore he concluded that there was no way of life in which all his views could so completely concentre as in that of a soldier. In the art of war he thought it not difficult to excel, having observed his new friends not very much versed in the principles of tactics or fortification; he therefore studied all the military writers, both ancient and modern, and, in a short time, could tell how to have gained every remarkable battle that has been lost from the beginning of the world. He often showed at table how Alexander should have been checked in his conquests, what was the fatal error at Pharsalia, how Charles of Sweden might have escaped his ruin at Pultowa, and Marlborough might have been made to repent his temerity at Blenheim. He entrenched armies upon paper, so that no superiority of numbers could force them, and modelled in clay many impregnable fortresses, on which all the present arts of attack would be exhausted without effect.

Polyphilus, in a short time, obtained a commission; but before he could rub off the solemnity of a scholar, and gain the true air of a military vivacity, war was declared, and forces sent to the continent. Here Polyphilus unhappily found that study alone would not make a soldier; for being much accustomed to think, he let the sense of danger sink into his mind, and felt at the approach of any action, that terrour which a sentence of death would have brought upon him. He saw that, instead of conquering their fears, the endeavour of his gay friends was only to escape them; but his philosophy chained his mind to its object, and rather loaded him with shackles than furnished him with arms. He, however, suppressed his misery in silence, and passed through the campaign with honour, but found himself utterly unable to support another.

He then had recourse again to his books, and continued to range from one study to another. As I usually visit him once a month, and am admitted to him without previous notice, I have found him within this last half year, decyphering the Chinese language, making a farce, collecting a vocabulary of the obsolete terms of the English law, writing an inquiry concerning the ancient Corinthian brass, and forming a new scheme of the variations of the needle.

Thus is this powerful genius, which might have extended the sphere of any science, or benefited the world in any profession, dissipated in a boundless variety, without profit to others or himself! He makes sudden irruptions into the regions of knowledge, and sees all obstacles give way before

him; but he never stays long enough to complete his conquest, to establish laws, or bring away the spoils.

Such is often the folly of men, whom nature has enabled to obtain skill and knowledge, on terms so easy, that they have no sense of the value of the acquisition; they are qualified to make such speedy progress in learning, that they think themselves at liberty to loiter in the way, and by turning aside after every new object, lose the race, like Atalanta, to slower competitors, who press diligently forward, and whose force is directed to a single point.

I have often thought those happy that have been fixed, from the first dawn of thought, in a determination to some state of life, by the choice of one whose authority may preclude caprice, and whose influence may prejudice them in favour of his opinion. The general precept of consulting the genius is of little use, unless we are told how the genius can be known. If it is to be discovered only by experiment, life will be lost before the resolution can be fixed; if any other indications are to be found, they may, perhaps, be very early discerned. At least if to miscarry in an attempt be a proof of having mistaken the direction of the genius, men appear not less frequently deceived with regard to themselves than to others; and therefore no one has much reason to complain that his life was planned out by his friends, or to be confident that he should have had either more honour or happiness, by being abandoned to the chance of his own fancy.

It was said of the learned bishop Sanderson, that when he was preparing his lectures, he hesitated so much, and rejected so often, that, at the time of reading, he was often forced to produce, not what was best, but what happened to be at hand. This will be the state of every man, who, in the choice of his employment, balances all the arguments on every side; the complication is so intricate, the motives and objections so numerous, there is so much play for the imagination, and so much remains in the power of others, that reason is forced at last to rest in neutrality, the decision devolves into the hands of chance, and after a great part of life spent in inquiries which can never be resolved, the rest must often pass in repenting the unnecessary delay, and can be useful to few other purposes than to warn others against the same folly and to show, that of two states of life equally consistent with religion and virtue, he who chooses earliest chooses best.

No. 20. Saturday, May 26, 1750.

Ad populum phaleras, ego te intus, et in cute novi. Persius.

Such pageantry be to the people shown;
There boast thy horse's trappings and thy own;
I know thee to thy bottom, from within
Thy shallow centre, to thy utmost skin. Dryden.

Among the numerous stratagems, by which pride endeavours to recommend folly to regard, there is scarcely one that meets with less success than affectation, or a perpetual disguise of the real character, by fictitious appearances: whether it be, that every man hates falsehood, from the natural congruity of truth to his faculties of reason, or that every man is jealous of the honour of his understanding, and thinks his discernment consequently called in question, whenever any thing is exhibited under a borrowed form.

This aversion from all kinds of disguise, whatever be its cause, is universally diffused, and incessantly in action; nor is it necessary, that to exasperate detestation, or excite contempt, any interest should be invaded, or any competition attempted; it is sufficient, that there is an intention to deceive, an intention which every heart swells to oppose, and every tongue is busy to detect.

This reflection was awakened in my mind by a very common practice among my correspondents, of writing under characters which they cannot support, which are of no use to the explanation or enforcement of that which they describe or recommend; and which, therefore, since they assume them only for the sake of displaying their abilities, I will advise them for the future to forbear, as laborious without advantage.

It is almost a general ambition of those who favour me with their advice for the regulation of my conduct, or their contribution for the assistance of my understanding, to affect the style and the names of ladies. And I cannot always withhold some expression of anger, like Sir Hugh in the comedy, when I happen to find that a woman has a beard. I must therefore warn the gentle Phillis, that she send me no more letters from the Horse Guards; and require of Belinda, that she be content to resign her pretensions to female elegance, till she has lived three weeks without hearing the politics of Batson's coffee-house. I must indulge myself in the liberty of observation, that there were some allusions in Chloris's production, sufficient to show that Bracton and

Plowden are her favourite authors; and that Euphelia has not been long enough at home, to wear out all the traces of the phraseology which she learned in the expedition to Carthagena.

Among all my female friends, there was none who gave me more trouble to decypher her true character, than Penthesilea, whose letter lay on my desk three days before I could fix upon the real writer. There was a confusion of images, and medley of barbarity, which held me long in suspense; till by perseverance I disentangled the perplexity, and found that Penthesilea is the son of a wealthy stock-jobber, who spends his morning under his father's eye in Change-Alley, dines at a tavern in Covent-Garden, passes his evening in the playhouse, and part of the night at a gaming-table, and having learned the dialects of these various regions, has mingled them all in a studied composition. When Lee was once told by a critic, that it was very easy to write like a madman; he answered, that it was difficult to write like a madman, but easy enough to write like a fool; and I hope to be excused by my kind contributors, if, in imitation of this great author, I presume to remind them, that it is much easier not to write like a man, than to write like a woman.

I have, indeed, some ingenious well-wishers, who, without departing from their sex, have found very wonderful appellations. A very smart letter has been sent me from a puny ensign, signed Ajax Telamonius; another, in recommendation of a new treatise upon cards, from a gamester, who calls himself Sesostris: and another upon the improvements of the fishery, from Dioclesian: but as these seem only to have picked up their appellations by chance, without endeavouring at any particular imposture, their improprieties are rather instances of blunder than of affectation, and are, therefore, not equally fitted to inflame the hostile passions; for it is not folly but pride, not error but deceit, which the world means to persecute, when it raises the full cry of nature to hunt down affectation.

The hatred which dissimulation always draws upon itself, is so great, that if I did not know how much cunning differs from wisdom, I should wonder that any men have so little knowledge of their own interest, as to aspire to wear a mask for life; to try to impose upon the world a character, to which they feel themselves void of any just claim; and to hazard their quiet, their fame and even their profit, by exposing themselves to the danger of that reproach, malevolence, and neglect, which such a discovery as they have always to fear will certainly bring upon them.

It might be imagined, that the pleasure of reputation should consist in the satisfaction of having our opinion of our own merit confirmed by the suffrage of the public; and that, to be extolled for a quality, which a man knows himself to want, should give him no other happiness than to be mistaken for the owner of an estate, over which he chances to be travelling. But he who subsists upon affectation, knows nothing of this delicacy; like a desperate adventurer in commerce, he takes up reputation upon trust, mortgages possessions which he never had, and enjoys to the fatal hour of bankruptcy, though with a thousand terrours and anxieties, the unnecessary splendour of borrowed riches.

Affectation is to be always distinguished from hypocrisy, as being the art of counterfeiting those qualities which we might, with innocence and safety, be known to want. Thus the man, who, to carry on any fraud, or to conceal any crime, pretends to rigours of devotion, and exactness of life, is guilty of hypocrisy; and his guilt is greater, as the end, for which he puts on the false appearance, is more pernicious. But he that, with an awkward address, and unpleasing countenance, boasts of the conquests made by him among the ladies, and counts over the thousands which he might have possessed if he would have submitted to the yoke of matrimony, is chargeable only with affectation. Hypocrisy is the necessary burthen of villany, affectation part of the chosen trappings of folly; the one completes a villain, the other only finishes a fop. Contempt is the proper punishment of affectation, and detestation the just consequence of hypocrisy.

With the hypocrite it is not at present my intention to expostulate, though even he might be taught the excellency of virtue, by the necessity of seeming to be virtuous; but the man of affectation may, perhaps, be reclaimed, by finding how little he is likely to gain by perpetual constraint, and incessant vigilance, and how much more securely he might make his way to esteem, by cultivating real, than displaying counterfeit qualities.

Every thing future is to be estimated, by a wise man, in proportion to the probability of attaining it, and its value, when attained; and neither of these considerations will much contribute to the encouragement of affectation. For, if the pinnacles of fame be, at best, slippery, how unsteady must his footing be who stands upon pinnacles without foundation! If praise be made by the inconstancy and maliciousness of those who must confer it, a blessing which no man can promise himself from the most conspicuous merit and vigorous industry, how faint must be the hope of gaining it, when the

uncertainty is multiplied by the weakness of the pretensions! He that pursues fame with just claims, trusts his happiness to the winds; but he that endeavours after it by false merit, has to fear, not only the violence of the storm, but the leaks of his vessel. Though he should happen to keep above water for a time, by the help of a soft breeze, and a calm sea, at the first gust he must inevitably founder, with this melancholy reflection, that, if he would have been content with his natural station, he might have escaped his calamity. Affectation may possibly succeed for a time, and a man may, by great attention, persuade others, that he really has the qualities which he presumes to boast; but the hour will come when he should exert them, and then, whatever he enjoyed in praise, he must suffer in reproach.

Applause and admiration are by no means to be counted among the necessaries of life, and therefore any indirect arts to obtain them have very little claim to pardon or compassion. There is scarcely any man without some valuable or improvable qualities, by which he might always secure himself from contempt. And perhaps exemption from ignominy is the most eligible reputation, as freedom from pain is, among some philosophers, the definition of happiness.

If we therefore compare the value of the praise obtained by fictitious excellence, even while the cheat is yet undiscovered, with that kindness which every man may suit by his virtue, and that esteem to which most men may rise by common understanding, steadily and honestly applied, we shall find that when from the adscititious happiness all the deductions are made by fear and casualty, there will remain nothing equiponderant to the security of truth. The state of the possessor of humble virtues, to the affecter of great excellencies, is that of a small cottage of stone, to the palace raised with ice by the empress of Russia; it was for a time splendid and luminous, but the first sunshine melted it to nothing.

No. 21. Tuesday, May 29, 1750.

Terra salutiferas herbas, eademque nocentes,
Nutrit; et urticæ proxima sæpe rosa est. Ovid.

Our bane and physic the same earth bestows,
And near the noisome nettle blooms the rose.

Every man is prompted by the love of himself to imagine, that he possesses some qualities, superior, either in kind or in degree, to those which he sees allotted to the rest of the world; and, whatever apparent disadvantages he may suffer in the comparison with others, he has some invisible distinctions, some latent reserve of excellence, which he throws into the balance, and by which he generally fancies that it is turned in his favour.

The studious and speculative part of mankind always seem to consider their fraternity as placed in a state of opposition to those who are engaged in the tumult of public business; and have pleased themselves, from age to age, with celebrating the felicity of their own condition, and with recounting the perplexity of politics, the dangers of greatness, the anxieties of ambition, and the miseries of riches.

Among the numerous topics of declamation, that their industry has discovered on this subject, there is none which they press with greater efforts, or on which they have more copiously laid out their reason and their imagination, than the instability of high stations, and the uncertainty with which the profits and honours are possessed, that must be acquired with so much hazard, vigilance, and labour.

This they appear to consider as an irrefragable argument against the choice of the statesman and the warrior; and swell with confidence of victory, thus furnished by the muses with the arms which never can be blunted, and which no art or strength of their adversaries can elude or resist.

It was well known by experience to the nations which employed elephants in war, that though by the terror of their bulk, and the violence of their impression, they often threw the enemy into disorder, yet there was always danger in the use of them, very nearly equivalent to the advantage; for if their first charge could be supported, they were easily driven back upon their confederates; they then broke through the troops behind them, and made no less havoc in the precipitation of their retreat, than in the fury of their onset.

I know not whether those who have so vehemently urged the inconveniences and danger of an active life, have not made use of arguments that may be retorted with equal force upon themselves; and whether the happiness of a candidate for literary fame be not subject to the same uncertainty with that of him who governs provinces, commands armies, presides in the senate, or dictates in the cabinet.

That eminence of learning is not to be gained without labour, at least equal to that which any other kind of greatness can require, will be allowed by those who wish to elevate the character of a scholar; since they cannot but know, that every human acquisition is valuable in proportion to the difficulty employed in its attainment. And that those who have gained the esteem and veneration of the world, by their knowledge or their genius, are by no means exempt from the solicitude which any other kind of dignity produces, may be conjectured from the innumerable artifices which they make use of to degrade a superior, to repress a rival, or obstruct a follower; artifices so gross and mean, as to prove evidently how much a man may excel in learning, without being either more wise or more virtuous than those whose ignorance he pities or despises.

Nothing, therefore, remains, by which the student can gratify his desire of appearing to have built his happiness on a more firm basis than his antagonist, except the certainty with which his honours are enjoyed. The garlands gained by the heroes of literature, must be gathered from summits equally difficult to climb with those that bear the civic or triumphal wreaths, they must be worn with equal envy, and guarded with equal care from those hands that are always employed in efforts to tear them away; the only remaining hope is, that their verdure is more lasting, and that they are less likely to fade by time, or less obnoxious to the blasts of accident.

Even this hope will receive very little encouragement from the examination of the history of learning, or observation of the fate of scholars in the present age. If we look back into past times, we find innumerable names of authors once in high reputation, read perhaps by the beautiful, quoted by the witty, and commented on by the grave; but of whom we now know only that they once existed. If we consider the distribution of literary fame in our own time, we shall find it a possession of very uncertain tenure; sometimes bestowed by a sudden caprice of the public, and again transferred to a new favourite, for no other reason than that he is new; sometimes refused to long labour and eminent desert, and some-

times granted to very slight pretensions; lost sometimes by security and negligence, and sometimes by too diligent endeavours to retain it.

A successful author is equally in danger of the diminution of his fame, whether he continues or ceases to write. The regard of the public is not to be kept but by tribute, and the remembrance of past service will quickly languish, unless successive performances frequently revive it. Yet in every new attempt there is new hazard, and there are few who do not, at some unlucky time, injure their own characters by attempting to enlarge them.

There are many possible causes of that inequality which we may so frequently observe in the performances of the same man, from the influence of which no ability or industry is sufficiently secured, and which have so often sullied the splendour of genius, that the wit, as well as the conqueror, may be properly cautioned not to indulge his pride with too early triumphs, but to defer to the end of life his estimate of happiness.

——Ultima semper
Expectanda dies homini, dicique beatus
Ante obitum nemo supremaque funera debet.

But no frail man, however great or high,
Can be concluded blest before he die. ADDISON.

Among the motives which urge an author to undertakings by which his reputation is impaired, one of the most frequent must be mentioned with tenderness, because it is not to be counted among his follies, but his miseries. It very often happens that the works of learning or of wit are performed at the direction of those by whom they are to be rewarded; the writer has not always the choice of his subject, but is compelled to accept any task that is thrown before him, without much consideration of his own convenience, and without time to prepare himself by previous studies.

Miscarriages of this kind are likewise frequently the consequence of that acquaintance with the great, which is generally considered as one of the chief privileges of literature and genius. A man who has once learned to think himself exalted by familiarity with those whom nothing but their birth, or their fortunes, or such stations as are seldom gained by moral excellence, set above him, will not be long without submitting his understanding to their conduct; he will suffer them to prescribe the course of his studies, and employ him for their own purposes, either of diversion or interest. His

desire of pleasing those whose favour he has weakly made necessary to himself, will not suffer him to consider how little he is qualified for the work imposed. Either his vanity will tempt him to conceal his deficiencies, or that cowardice, which always encroaches fast upon such as spend their lives in the company of persons higher than themselves, will not leave him resolution to assert the liberty of choice.

But, though we suppose that a man by his fortune can avoid the necessity of dependence, and by his spirit can repel the usurpations of patronage, yet he may easily, by writing long, happen to write ill. There is a general succession of events, in which contraries are produced by periodical vicissitudes; labour and care are rewarded with success, success produces confidence, confidence relaxes industry, and negligence ruins that reputation which accuracy had raised.

He that happens not to be lulled by praise into supineness, may be animated by it to undertakings above his strength, or incited to fancy himself alike qualified for every kind of composition, and able to comply with the public taste through all its variations. By some opinion like this, many men have been engaged, at an advanced age, in attempts which they had not time to complete, and after a few weak efforts, sunk into the grave with vexation to see the rising generation gain ground upon them. From these failures the highest genius is not exempt; that judgment, which appears so penetrating, when it is employed upon the works of others, very often fails where interest or passion can exert their power. We are blinded in examining our own labours by innumerable prejudices. Our juvenile compositions please us, because they bring to our minds the remembrance of youth; our later performances we are ready to esteem, because we are unwilling to think that we have made no improvement; what flows easily from the pen charms us, because we read with pleasure that which flatters our opinion of our own powers; what was composed with great struggles of the mind we do not easily reject, because we cannot bear that so much labour should be fruitless. But the reader has none of these prepossessions, and wonders that the author is so unlike himself, without considering that the same soil will, with different culture, afford different products.

No. 22. Saturday, June 2, 1750.

——Ego nec studium sine divite vena,
Nec rude quid prosit video ingenium, alterius sic
Altera poscit opem res, et conjurat amice. Hor.

Without a genius learning soars in vain;
And without learning genius sinks again;
Their force united crowns the sprightly reign.
Elphinston.

Wit and *Learning* were the children of Apollo, by different mothers; *Wit* was the offspring of *Euphrosyne*, and resembled her in cheerfulness and vivacity; *Learning* was born of *Sophia*, and retained her seriousness and caution. As their mothers were rivals, they were bred up by them from their birth in habitual opposition, and all means were so incessantly employed to impress upon them a hatred and contempt of each other, that though Apollo, who foresaw the ill effects of their discord, endeavoured to soften them, by dividing his regard equally between them, yet his impartiality and kindness were without effect; the maternal animosity was deeply rooted, having been intermingled with their first ideas, and was confirmed every hour, as fresh opportunities occurred of exerting it. No sooner were they of age to be received into the apartments of the other celestials, than *Wit* began to entertain Venus at her toilet, by aping the solemnity of *Learning*, and *Learning* to divert Minerva at her loom, by exposing the blunders and ignorance of *Wit*.

Thus they grew up, with malice perpetually increasing, by the encouragement which each received from those whom their mothers had persuaded to patronise and support them; and longed to be admitted to the table of Jupiter, not so much for the hope of gaining honour, as of excluding a rival from all pretensions to regard, and of putting an everlasting stop to the progress of that influence which either believed the other to have obtained by mean arts and false appearances.

At last the day came, when they were both, with the usual solemnities, received into the class of superior deities, and allowed to take nectar from the hand of Hebe. But from that hour *Concord* lost her authority at the table of Jupiter. The rivals, animated by their new dignity, and incited by the alternate applauses of the associate powers, harassed each other by incessant contests, with such a regular vicissitude of victory, that neither was depressed.

It was observable, that, at the beginning of every debate,

the advantage was on the side of *Wit*; and that, at the first sallies, the whole assembly sparkled, according to Homer's expression, with unextinguishable merriment. But *Learning* would reserve her strength till the burst of applause was over, and the languor with which the violence of joy is always succeeded, began to promise more calm and patient attention. She then attempted her defence, and, by comparing one part of her antagonist's objections with another, commonly made him confute himself; or, by showing how small a part of the question he had taken into his view, proved that his opinion could have no weight. The audience began gradually to lay aside their prepossessions, and rose, at last, with great veneration for *Learning*, but with greater kindness for *Wit*.

Their conduct was, whenever they desired to recommend themselves to distinction, entirely opposite. *Wit* was daring and adventurous; *Learning* cautious and deliberate. *Wit* thought nothing reproachful but dulness; *Learning* was afraid of no imputation but that of error. *Wit* answered before he understood, lest his quickness of apprehension should be questioned: *Learning* paused, where there was no difficulty, lest any insiduous sophism should lie undiscovered. *Wit* perplexed every debate by rapidity and confusion; *Learning* tired the hearers with endless distinctions, and prolonged the dispute without advantage, by proving that which never was denied. *Wit*, in hopes of shining, would venture to produce what he had not considered, and often succeeded beyond his own expectation, by following the train of a lucky thought; *Learning* would reject every new notion, for fear of being entangled in consequences which she could not foresee, and was often hindered, by her caution, from pressing her advantages, and subduing her opponent.

Both had prejudices, which in some degree hindered their progress towards perfection, and left them open to attacks. Novelty was the darling of *Wit*, and antiquity of *Learning*. To *Wit*, all that was new was specious; to *Learning*, whatever was ancient was venerable. *Wit* however seldom failed to divert those whom he could not convince, and to convince was not often his ambition; *Learning* always supported her opinion with so many collateral truths, that, when the cause was decided against her, her argments were remembered with admiration.

Nothing was more common, on either side, than to quit their proper characters, and to hope for a complete conquest by the use of the weapons which had been employed against them. *Wit* would sometimes labour a syllogism, and *Learning* distort her features with a jest; but they always suffered

by the experiment, and betrayed themselves to confutation or contempt. The seriousness of *Wit* was without dignity, and the merriment of *Learning* without vivacity.

Their contests, by long continuance, grew at last important, and the divinities broke into parties. *Wit* was taken into protection of the laughter-loving Venus, had a retinue allowed him of *Smiles* and *Jests*, and was often permitted to dance among the *Graces*. *Learning* still continued the favourite of Minerva, and seldom went out of her palace, without a train of the severer virtues, *Chastity*, *Temperance*, *Fortitude*, and *Labour*. *Wit*, cohabiting with *Malice*, had a son named *Satyr*, who followed him, carrying a quiver filled with poisoned arrows, which, where they once drew blood, could by no skill ever be extracted. These arrows he frequently shot at *Learning*, when she was most earnestly or usefully employed, engaged in abstruse inquiries, or giving instructions to her followers. Minerva therefore deputed *Criticism* to her aid, who generally broke the point of *Satyr's* arrows, turned them aside, or retorted them on himself.

Jupiter was at last angry that the peace of the heavenly regions should be in perpetual danger of violation, and resolved to dismiss these troublesome antagonists to the lower world. Hither therefore they came, and carried on their ancient quarrel among mortals, nor was either long without zealous votaries. *Wit*, by his gaiety captivated the young; and *Learning*, by her authority, influenced the old. Their power quickly appeared by very eminent effects, theatres were built for the reception of *Wit*; and colleges endowed for the residence of *Learning*. Each party endeavoured to outvie the other in cost and magnificence, and to propagate an opinion, that it was necessary, from the first entrance into life, to enlist in one of the factions; and that none could hope for the regard of either divinity, who had once entered the temple of the rival power.

There were indeed a class of mortals, by whom *Wit* and *Learning* were equally disregarded: these were the devotees of Plutus, the god of riches; among these it seldom happened that the gaiety of *Wit* could raise a smile, or the eloquence of *Learning* procure attention. In revenge of this contempt they agreed to incite their followers against them; but the forces that were sent on those expeditions frequently betrayed their trust; and, in contempt of the orders which they had received, flattered the rich in public, while they scorned them in their hearts; and when, by this treachery, they had obtained the favour of Plutus, affected to look with an air of supe-

riority on those who still remained in the service of *Wit* and *Learning*.

Disgusted with these desertions, the two rivals, at the same time, petitioned Jupiter for re-admission to their native habitations. Jupiter thundered on the right hand, and they prepared to obey the happy summons. *Wit* readily spread his wings and soared aloft, but not being able to see far, was bewildered in the pathless immensity of the ethereal space. *Learning*, who knew the way, shook her pinions; but for want of natural vigour could only take short flights: so, after many efforts, they both sunk again to the ground, and learned, from their mutual distress, the necessity of union. They therefore joined their hands, and renewed their flight; *Learning* was born up by the vigour of *Wit*, and *Wit* guided by the perspicacity of *Learning*. They soon reached the dwellings of Jupiter, and were so endeared to each other, that they lived afterwards in perpetual concord. *Wit* persuaded *Learning* to converse with the *Graces*, and *Learning* engaged *Wit* in the service of the *Virtues*. They were now the favourites of all the powers of heaven, and gladdened every banquet by their presence. They soon after married, at the command of Jupiter, and had a numerous progeny of *Arts* and *Sciences*.

No. 23. Tuesday, June 5, 1750.

Tres mihi convivæ prope dissentire videntur;
Poscentur vario multum diverso palato. Hor.

Three guests I have, dissenting at my feast,
Requiring each to gratify his taste
With different food. Francis.

That every man should regulate his actions by his own conscience, without any regard to the opinions of the rest of the world, is one of the first precepts of moral prudence; justified not only by the suffrage of reason, which declares that none of the gifts of heaven are to lie useless, but by the voice likewise of experience, which will soon inform us that if we make the praise or blame of others the rule of our conduct, we shall be distracted by a boundless variety of irreconcilable judgments, be held in perpetual suspense between contrary impulses, and consult for ever without determination.

I know not whether, for the same reason, it is not necessary for an author to place some confidence in his own skill, and

to satisfy himself in the knowledge that he has not deviated from the established laws of composition, without submitting his works to frequent examinations before he gives them to the public, or endeavouring to secure success by a solicitous conformity to advice and criticism.

It is, indeed, quickly discoverable, that consultation and compliance can conduce little to the perfection of any literary performance; for whoever is so doubtful of his own abilities as to encourage the remarks of others, will find himself every day embarrassed with new difficulties, and will harass his mind, in vain, with the hopeless labour of uniting heterogeneous ideas, digesting independent hints, and collecting into one point the several rays of borrowed light, emitted often with contrary directions.

Of all authors, those who retail their labours in periodical sheets would be most unhappy, if they were much to regard the censures or the admonitions of their readers: for, as their works are not sent into the world at once, but by small parts, in gradual succession, it is always imagined by those who think themselves qualified to give instructions, that they may yet redeem their former failings by hearkening to better judges, and supply the deficiencies of their plan by the help of the criticisms which are so liberally afforded.

I have had occasion to observe, sometimes with vexation, and sometimes with merriment, the different temper with which the same man reads a printed and manuscript performance. When a book is once in the hands of the public, it is considered as permanent and unalterable; and the reader, if he be free from personal prejudices, takes it up with no other intention than of pleasing or instructing himself: he accommodates his mind to the author's design; and, having no interest in refusing the amusement that is offered him, never interrupts his own tranquillity by studied cavils, or destroys his satisfactions in that which is already well, by an anxious inquiry how it might be bettered; but is often contented without pleasure, and pleased without perfection.

But if the same man be called to consider the merit of a production yet unpublished, he brings an imagination heated with objections to passages which he has yet never heard; he invokes all the powers of criticism, and stores his memory with Taste and Grace, Purity and Delicacy, Manners and Unities, sounds which, having been once uttered by those that understood them, have been since re-echoed without meaning, and kept up to the disturbance of the world, by a constant repercussion from one coxcomb to another. He considers himself as obliged to show, by some proof of his abilities,

that he is not consulted to no purpose, and therefore watches every opening for objection, and looks round for every opportunity to propose some specious alteration. Such opportunities a very small degree of sagacity will enable him to find; for, in every work of imagination, the disposition of parts, the insertion of incidents, and use of decorations, may be varied a thousand ways with equal propriety; and as in things nearly equal, that will always seem best to every man which he himself produces; the critic, whose business is only to propose, without the care of execution, can never want the satisfaction of believing that he has suggested very important improvements, nor the power of enforcing his advice by arguments, which, as they appear convincing to himself, either his kindness or his vanity will press obstinately and importunately, without suspicion that he may possibly judge too hastily in favour of his own advice, or inquire whether the advantage of the new scheme be proportionate to the labour.

It is observed by the younger Pliny, that an orator ought not so much to select the strongest arguments which his cause admits, as to employ all which his imagination can afford: for, in pleading, those reasons are of most value, which will most affect the judges; and the judges, says he, will be always most touched with that which they had before conceived. Every man who is called to give his opinion of a performance, decides upon the same principle: he first suffers himself to form expectations, and then is angry at his disappointment. He lets his imagination rove at large, and wonders that another, equally unconfined in the boundless ocean of possibility, takes a different course.

But, though the rule of Pliny be judiciously laid down, it is not applicable to the writer's cause, because there always lies an appeal from domestic criticism to a higher judicature, and the public, which is never corrupted, nor often deceived, is to pass the last sentence upon literary claims.

Of the great force of preconceived opinions I had many proofs, when I first entered upon this weekly labour. My readers having, from the performances of my predecessors, established an idea of unconnected essays, to which they believed all future authors under a necessity of conforming, were impatient of the least deviation from their system, and numerous remonstrances were accordingly made by each, as he found his favourite subject omitted or delayed. Some were angry that the RAMBLER did not, like the SPECTATOR, introduce himself to the acquaintance of the public, by an account of his own birth and studies, an enumeration of his adventures, and a description of his physiognomy. Others

soon began to remark that he was a solemn, serious, dictatorial writer, without sprightliness or gaiety, and called out with vehemence for mirth and humour. Another admonished him to have a special eye upon the various clubs of this great city, and informed him that much of the Spectator's vivacity was laid out upon such assemblies. He has been censured for not imitating the politeness of his predecessors, having hitherto neglected to take the ladies under his protection, and give them rules for the just opposition of colours, and the proper dimensions of ruffles and pinners. He has been required by one to fix a particular censure upon those matrons who play at cards with spectacles: and another is very much offended whenever he meets with a speculation in which naked precepts are comprised without the illustration of examples and characters.

I make not the least question that all these monitors intend the promotion of my design, and the instruction of my readers; but they do not know, or do not reflect, that an author has a rule of choice peculiar to himself; and selects those subjects which he is best qualified to treat, by the course of his studies, or the accidents of his life; that some topics of amusement have been already treated with too much success to invite a competition; and that he who endeavours to gain many readers must try various arts of invitation, essay every avenue of pleasure, and make frequent changes in his methods of approach.

I cannot but consider myself, amidst this tumult of criticism, as a ship in a poetical tempest, impelled at the same time by opposite winds, and dashed by the waves from every quarter, but held upright by the contrariety of the assailants, and secured in some measure, by multiplicity of distress. Had the opinion of my censurers been unanimous, it might perhaps have overset my resolution; but since I find them at variance with each other, I can, without scruple, neglect them, and endeavour to gain the favour of the public by following the direction of my own reason, and indulging the sallies of my own imagination.

No. 24. Saturday, June 9, 1750.

Nemo in sese tentat descendere. Persius.

None, none descends into himself. Dryden.

Among the precepts, or aphorisms, admitted by general consent, and inculcated by frequent repetition, there is none more famous among the masters of ancient wisdom, than that compendious lesson, Γνῶθι σεαυτόν, *Be acquainted with thyself;* ascribed by some to an oracle, and by others to Chilo of Lacedemon.

This is, indeed, a dictate, which, in the whole extent of its meaning, may be said to comprise all the speculation requisite to a moral agent. For what more can be necessary to the regulation of life, than the knowledge of our original, our end, our duties, and our relation to other beings?

It is however very improbable that the first author, whoever he was, intended to be understood in this unlimited and complicated sense; for of the inquiries, which in so large an acceptation it would seem to recommend, some are too extensive for the powers of man, and some require light from above, which was not yet indulged to the heathen world.

We might have had more satisfaction concerning the original import of this celebrated sentence, if history had informed us, whether it was uttered as a general instruction to mankind, or as a particular caution to some private inquirer; whether it was applied to some single occasion, or laid down as the universal rule of life.

There will occur, upon the slightest consideration, many possible circumstances, in which this monition might very properly be enforced: for every error in human conduct must arise from ignorance in ourselves, either perpetual or temporary; and happen either because we do not know what is best and fittest, or because our knowledge is at the time of action not present to the mind.

When a man employs himself upon remote and unnecessary subjects, and wastes his life upon questions which cannot be resolved, and of which the solution would conduce very little to the advancement of happiness; when he lavishes his hours in calculating the weight of the terraqueous globe, or in adjusting successive systems of worlds beyond the reach of the telescope: he may be very properly recalled from his excursions by this precept, and reminded, that there is a nearer being with which it is his duty to be more ac-

quainted; and from which his attention has hitherto been withheld by studies to which he has no other motive than vanity or curiosity.

The great praise of Socrates, is that he drew the wits of Greece by his instruction and example, from the vain pursuit of natural philosophy to moral inquiries, and turned their thoughts from stars and tides, and matter and motion, upon the various modes of virtue, and relations of life. All his lectures were but commentaries upon this saying; if we suppose the knowledge of ourselves, recommended by Chilo, in opposition to other inquiries less suitable to the state of man.

The great fault of men of learning is still, that they offend against this rule, and appear willing to study any thing rather than themselves; for which reason they are often despised by those with whom they imagine themselves above comparison: despised, as useless to common purposes, as unable to conduct the most trivial affairs, and unqualified to perform those offices by which the concatenation of society is preserved, and mutual tenderness excited and maintained.

Gelidus is a man of great penetration and deep researches. Having a mind naturally formed for the abstruser sciences, he can comprehend intricate combinations without confusion, and being of a temper naturally cool and equal, he is seldom interrupted by his passions in the pursuit of the longest chain of unexpected consequences. He has, therefore, a long time indulged hopes, that the solution of some problems, by which the professors of science have been hitherto baffled, is reserved for his genius and industry. He spends his time in the highest room of his house, into which none of his family are suffered to enter; and when he comes down to his dinner, or his rest, he walks about like a stranger that is there only for a day, without any tokens of regard or tenderness. He has totally divested himself of all human sensations; he has neither eye for beauty, nor ear for complaint; he neither rejoices at the good fortune of his nearest friend, nor mourns for any public or private calamity. Having once received a letter, and given it to his servant to read, he was informed, that it was written by his brother, who, being shipwrecked, had swam naked to land, and was destitute of necessaries in a foreign country. Naked and destitute! says Gelidus, reach down the last volume of meteorological observations, extract an exact account of the wind, and note it carefully in the diary of the weather.

The family of Gelidus once broke into his study, to show him that a town at a small distance was on fire, and in a few

moments a servant came to tell him, that the flame had caught so many houses on both sides, that the inhabitants were confounded, and began to think of rather escaping with their lives than saving their dwellings. What you tell me, says Gelidus, is very probable, for fire naturally acts in a circle.

Thus lives this great philosopher insensible to every spectacle of distress, and unmoved by the loudest call of social nature, for want of considering that men are designed for the succour and comfort of each other; that though there are hours which may be laudably spent upon knowledge not immediately useful, yet the first attention is due to practical virtue; and that he may be justly driven out from the commerce of mankind, who has so far abstracted himself from the species, as to partake neither of the joys nor griefs of others, but neglects the endearments of his wife, and the caresses of his children, to count the drops of rain, note the changes of the wind, and calculate the eclipses of the moons of Jupiter.

I shall reserve to some future paper the religious and important meaning of this epitome of wisdom, and only remark, that it may be applied to the gay and light, as well as to the grave and solemn parts of life; and that not only the philosopher may forfeit his pretences to real learning, but the wit and beauty may miscarry in their schemes, by the want of this universal requisite, the knowledge of themselves.

It is surely for no other reason, that we see such numbers resolutely struggling against nature, and contending for that which they never can attain, endeavouring to unite contradictions, and determined to excel in characters inconsistent with each other; that stock-jobbers affect dress, gaiety and elegance, and mathematicians labour to be wits; that the soldier teases his acquaintance with questions in theology, and the academic hopes to divert the ladies by a recital of his gallantries. That absurdity of pride could proceed only from ignorance of themselves, by which Garth attempted criticism, and Congreve waived his title to dramatic reputation, and desired to be considered only as a gentleman.

Euphues, with great parts, and extensive knowledge, has a clouded aspect, and ungracious form; yet it has been his ambition, from his first entrance into life to distinguish himself by particularities in his dress, to outvie beaux in embroidery, to import new trimmings, and to be foremost in the fashion. Euphues has turned on his exterior appearance, that attention which would always have produced esteem, had it been fixed upon his mind; and though his virtues and abilities have preserved him from the contempt which he has so

diligently solicited, he has, at least, raised one impediment to his reputation; since all can judge of his dress, but few of his understanding; and many who discern that he is a fop, are unwilling to believe that he can be wise.

There is one instance, in which the ladies are particularly unwilling to observe the rule of Chilo. They are desirous to hide from themselves the advances of age, and endeavour too frequently to supply the sprightliness and bloom of youth by artificial beauty and forced vivacity. They hope to inflame the heart by glances which have lost their fire, or melt it by languor which is no longer delicate; they play over the airs which pleased at a time when they were expected only to please, and forget that airs in time ought to give place to virtues. They continue to trifle, because they could once trifle agreeably, till those who shared their early pleasures are withdrawn to more serious engagements; and are scarcely awakened from their dream of perpetual youth, but by the scorn of those whom they endeavour to rival.*

No. 25. Tuesday, June 12, 1750.

Possunt quia posse videntur. Virgil.

For they can conquer who believe they can. Dryden.

There are some vices and errors which, though often fatal to those in whom they are found, have yet, by the universal consent of mankind, been considered as entitled to some degree of respect, or have, at least, been exempted from contemptuous infamy, and condemned by the severest moralists with pity rather than detestation.

A constant and invariable example of this general partiality will be found in the different regard which has always been shown to rashness and cowardice; two vices, of which, though they may be conceived equally distant from the middle point, where true fortitude is placed, and may equally injure any public or private interest, yet the one is never mentioned without some kind of veneration, and the other always con-

* Mrs. Piozzi says, that by *Gelidus*, in this paper, the author meant to represent Mr. Coulson, a mathematician, who formerly lived at Rochester. This is not very probable, if we consider the character Davies gives of Mr. Coulson (Colson) in his life of Garrick, which was certainly written under Dr. Johnson's inspection, and, what relates to Colson probably from his information. C.

sidered as a topic of unlimited and licentious censure, on which all the virulence of reproach may be lawfully exerted.

The same distinction is made by the common suffrage, between profusion and avarice, and, perhaps, between many other opposite vices; and, as I have found reason to pay great regard to the voice of the people, in cases where knowledge has been forced upon them by experience, without long deductions or deep researches, I am inclined to believe that this distribution of respect is not without some agreement with the nature of things; and that in the faults, which are thus invested with extraordinary privileges, there are generally some latent principles of merit, some possibilities of future virtue, which may, by degrees, break from obstruction, and by time and opportunity be brought into act.

It may be laid down as an axiom, that it is more easy to take away superfluities than to supply defects; and therefore he that is culpable, because he has passed the middle point of virtue, is always accounted a fairer object of hope, than he who fails by falling short. The one has all that perfection requires, and more, but the excess may be easily retrenched; the other wants the qualities requisite to excellence, and who can tell how he shall obtain them? We are certain that the horse may be taught to keep pace with his fellows, whose fault is that he leaves them behind. We know that a few strokes of the axe will lop a cedar; but what arts of cultivation can elevate a shrub?

To walk with circumspection and steadiness in the right path, at an equal distance between the extremes of error, ought to be the constant endeavour of every reasonable being; nor can I think those teachers of moral wisdom much to be honoured as benefactors to mankind, who are always enlarging upon the difficulty of our duties, and providing rather excuses for vice, than incentives to virtue.

But, since to most it will happen often, and to all sometimes, that there will be a deviation towards one side or the other, we ought always to employ our vigilance, with most attention, on that enemy from which there is the greatest danger, and to stray, if we must stray, towards those parts from whence we may quickly and easily return.

Among other opposite qualities of the mind, which may become dangerous, though in different degrees, I have often had occasion to consider the contrary effects of presumption and despondency: of heady confidence, which promises victory without contest, and heartless pusillanimity, which shrinks back from the thought of great undertakings, con-

founds difficulty with impossibility, and considers all advancement towards any new attainment as irreversibly prohibited.

Presumption will be easily corrected. Every experiment will teach caution, and miscarriages will hourly show, that attempts are not always rewarded with success. The most precipitate ardour will, in time, be taught the necessity of methodical gradation and preparatory measures; and the most daring confidence be convinced that neither merit nor abilities can command events.

It is the advantage of vehemence and activity, that they are always hastening to their own reformation; because they incite us to try whether our expectations are well grounded, and therefore detect the deceits which they are apt to occasion. But timidity is a disease of the mind more obstinate and fatal; for a man once persuaded that any impediment is insuperable, has given it, with respect to himself, that strength and weight which it had not before. He can scarcely strive with vigour and perseverance, when he has no hope of gaining the victory; and since he never will try his strength, can never discover the unreasonableness of his fears.

There is often to be found in men devoted to literature a kind of intellectual cowardice, which whoever converses much among them, may observe frequently to depress the alacrity of enterprise, and, by consequence, to retard the improvement of science. They have annexed to every species of knowledge some chimerical character of terror and inhibition, which they transmit, without much reflection, from one another; they first fright themselves, and then propagate the panic to their scholars and acquaintance. One study is inconsistent with a lively imagination, another with a solid judgment; one is improper in the early parts of life, another requires so much time, that it is not to be attempted at an advanced age; one is dry and contracts the sentiments, another is diffuse and overburdens the memory; one is insufferable to taste and delicacy, and another wears out life in the study of words, and is useless to a wise man, who desires only the knowledge of things.

But of all the bugbears by which the *Infantes barbati*, boys both young and old, have been hitherto frightened from digressing into new tracts of learning, none has been more mischievously efficacious than an opinion that every kind of knowledge requires a peculiar genius, or mental constitution, framed for the reception of some ideas, and the exclusion of others; and that to him whose genius is not adapted to the study which he prosecutes, all labour shall be vain and fruitless, vain as an endeavour to mingle oil and water, or in the

language of chemistry, to amalgamate bodies of heterogeneous principles.

This opinion we may reasonably suspect to have been propagated by vanity, beyond the truth. It is natural for those who have raised a reputation by any science, to exalt themselves as endowed by heaven with peculiar powers, or marked out by an extraordinary designation for their profession; and to fright competitors away by representing the difficulties with which they must contend, and the necessity of qualities which are supposed to be not generally conferred, and which no man can know, but by experience, whether he enjoys.

To this discouragement it may be possibly answered, that since a genius, whatever it be, is like fire in the flint, only to be produced by collision with a proper subject, it is the business of every man to try whether his faculties may not happily co-operate with his desires; and since they whose proficiency he admires, knew their own force only by the event, he needs but engage in the same undertaking with equal spirit, any may reasonably hope for equal success.

There is another species of false intelligence, given by those who profess to show the way to the summit of knowledge, of equal tendency to depress the mind with false distrust of itself, and weaken it by needless solicitude and dejection. When a scholar whom they desire to animate, consults them at his entrance on some new study, it is common to make flattering representations of its pleasantness and facility. Thus they generally attain one of two ends almost equally desirable; they either incite his industry by elevating his hopes, or produce a high opinion of their own abilities, since they are supposed to relate only what they have found, and to have proceeded with no less ease than they promise to their followers.

The student, inflamed by this encouragement, sets forward in the new path, and proceeds a few steps with great alacrity, but he soon finds asperities and intricacies of which he has not been forewarned, and imagining that none ever were so entangled or fatigued before him, sinks suddenly into despair, and desists as from an expedition in which fate opposes him. Thus his terrours are multiplied by his hopes, and he is defeated without resistance, because he had no expectation of an enemy.

Of these treacherous instructors, the one destroys industry, by declaring that industry is vain, the other by representing it as needless; the one cuts away the root of hope, the other raises it only to be blasted; the one confines his pupil to the

shore, by telling him that his wreck is certain, the other sends him to sea, without preparing him for tempests.

False hopes and false terrours are equally to be avoided. Every man who proposes to grow eminent by learning, should carry in his mind, at once, the difficulty of excellence, and the force of industry; and remember that fame is not conferred but as the recompense of labour, and that labour vigorously continued, has not often failed of its reward.

No. 26. Saturday, June 14, 1750.

Ingentes dominos, et claræ nomina famæ,
Illustrique graves nobilitate domos
Devita, et longè cautus fuge; contrahe vela,
Et te litteribus cymba propinqua vehat. Seneca.

Each mighty lord, big with a pompous name,
And each high house of fortune and of fame,
With caution fly; contract thy ample sails,
And near the shore improve the gentle gales. Elphinston.

Mr. Rambler—It is usual for men engaged in the same pursuits, to be inquisitive after the conduct and fortune of each other; and, therefore, I suppose it will not be unpleasing to you, to read an account of the various changes which have happened in part of a life devoted to literature. My narrative will not exhibit any great variety of events, or extraordinary revolutions; but may, perhaps, be not less useful, because I shall relate nothing which is not likely to happen to a thousand others.

I was born heir to a very small fortune, and left by my father, whom I cannot remember, to the care of an uncle. He having no children, always treated me as his son, and finding in me those qualities which old men easily discover in sprightly children, when they happen to love them, declared that a genius like mine should never be lost for want of cultivation. He therefore placed me, for the usual time, at a great school, and then sent me to the university, with a larger allowance than my own patrimony would have afforded, that I might not keep mean company, but learn to become my dignity when I should be made lord chancellor, which he often lamented, that the increase of his infirmities was very likely to preclude him from seeing.

This exuberance of money displayed itself in gaiety of

servation which the rest contributed either to enforce by repetition, or to illustrate by examples. Only one of them tried to divert the discourse, and endeavoured to direct my attention to remote questions, and common topics.

A man guilty of poverty easily believes himself suspected. I went, however, next morning to breakfast with him, who appeared ignorant of the drift of the conversation, and by a series of inquiries, drawing still nearer to the point, prevailed on him, not, perhaps, much against his will, to inform me that Mr. Dash, whose father was a wealthy attorney near my native place, had, the morning before, received an account of my uncle's resentment, and communicated his intelligence with the utmost industry of groveling insolence.

It was now no longer practicable to consort with my former friends, unless I would be content to be used as an inferior guest, who was to pay for his wine by mirth and flattery; a character which, if I could not escape it, I resolved to endure only among those who had never known me in the pride of plenty. I changed my lodgings, and frequented the coffee-houses in a different region of the town; where I was very quickly distinguished by several young gentlemen of high birth, and large estates, and began again to amuse my imagination with hopes of preferment, though not quite so confidently as when I had less experience.

The first great conquest which this new scene enabled me to gain over myself was, when I submitted to confess to a party, who invited me to an expensive diversion, that my revenues were not equal to such golden pleasures; they would not suffer me, however, to stay behind, and with great reluctance I yielded to be treated. I took that opportunity of recommending myself to some office or employment, which they unanimously promised to procure me by their joint interest.

I had now entered into a state of dependence, and had hopes, or fears, from almost every man I saw. If it be unhappy to have one patron, what is his misery who has many? I was obliged to comply with a thousand caprices, to concur in a thousand follies, and to countenance a thousand errours. I endured innumerable mortifications, if not from cruelty, at least from negligence, which will creep in upon the kindest and most delicate minds, when they converse without the mutual awe of equal condition. I found the spirit and vigour of liberty every moment sinking in me, and a servile fear of displeasing stealing by degrees upon all my behaviour, till no word, or look, or action was my own. As the solicitude to please increased, the power of pleasing grew less, and I

was always clouded with diffidence where it was most my interest and wish to shine.

My patrons, considering me as belonging to the community, and, therefore, not the charge of any particular person, made no scruple of neglecting any opportunity of promoting me, which every one thought more properly the business of another. An account of my expectations and disappointments, and the succeeding vicissitudes of my life, I shall give you in my following letter, which will be, I hope, of use to show how ill he forms his schemes, who expects happiness without freedom.

I am, &c.

No. 27. Tuesday, June 19, 1750.

——Pauperiem metuens potiore metallis
Libertate caret. Hor.

So he, who poverty with horrour views,
Who sells his freedom in exchange for gold,
(Freedom for mines of wealth too cheaply sold,)
Shall make eternal servitude his fate,
And feel a haughty master's galling weight. Francis.

Mr. Rambler—As it is natural for every man to think himself of importance, your knowledge of the world will incline you to forgive me, if I imagine your curiosity so much excited by the former part of my narration, as to make you desire that I should proceed without any unnecessary arts of connection. I shall, therefore, not keep you longer in such suspense, as perhaps my performance may not compensate.

In the gay company with which I was now united, I found those allurements and delights, which the friendship of young men always affords: there was that openness which naturally produces confidence, that affability which, in some measure, softened dependence, and that ardour of profession which incited hope. When our hearts were dilated with merriment, promises were poured out with unlimited profusion, and life and fortune were but a scanty sacrifice to friendship; but when the hour came, at which any effort was to be made, I had generally the vexation to find that my interest weighed nothing against the slightest amusement, and that every petty avocation was found a sufficient plea for continuing me in uncertainty and want. Their kindness was

indeed sincere: when they promised, they had no intention to deceive; but the same juvenile warmth which kindled their benevolence, gave force in the same proportion to every other passion, and I was forgotten as soon as any new pleasure seized on their attention.

Vagario told me one evening, that all my perplexities should soon be at an end, and desired me, from that instant, to throw upon him all care of my fortune, for a post of considerable value was that day become vacant, and he knew his interest sufficient to procure in the morning. He desired me to call on him early, that he might be dressed soon enough to wait on the minister before any other application should be made. I came as he appointed, with all the flame of gratitude, and was told by his servant, that having found at his lodgings, when he came home, an acquaintance who was going to travel, he had been persuaded to accompany him to Dover, and that they had taken post horses two hours before day.

I was once very near to preferment, by the kindness of Charinus, who, at my request, went to beg a place, which he thought me likely to fill with great reputation, and in which I should have many opportunities of promoting his interest in return; and he pleased himself with imagining the mutual benefits that we should confer, and the advances that we should make by our united strength. Away therefore he went, equally warm with friendship and ambition, and left me to prepare acknowledgments against his return. At length he came back, and told me that he had met in his way a party going to breakfast in the country, that the ladies importuned him too much to be refused, and that having passed the morning with them, he was come back to dress himself for a ball, to which he was invited for the evening.

I have suffered several disappointments from tailors and periwig-makers, who, by neglecting to perform their work, withheld my patrons from court; and once failed of an establishment for life by the delay of a servant, sent to a neighbouring shop to replenish a snuff-box.

At last I thought my solicitude at an end, for an office fell into the gift of Hippodamus's father, who being then in the country, could not very speedily fill it, and whose fondness would not have suffered him to refuse his son a less reasonable request. Hippodamus therefore set forward with great expedition, I expected every hour an account of his success. A long time I waited without any intelligence, but at last received a letter from New-market, by which I was informed, that the races were begun, and I knew the vehemence of his

passions too well to imagine he could refuse himself his favourite amusement.

You will not wonder that I was at last weary of the patronage of young men, especially as I found them not generally to promise much greater fidelity as they advanced in life; for I observed that what they gained in steadiness they lost in benevolence, and grew colder to my interest, as they became more diligent to promote their own. I was convinced that their liberality was only profuseness, that as chance directed, they were equally generous to vice and virtue, that they were warm but because they were thoughtless, and counted the support of a friend only amongst other gratifications of passion.

My resolution was now to ingratiate myself with men whose reputation was established, whose high stations enabled them to prefer me, and whose age exempted them from sudden changes of inclination. I was considered as a man of parts, and therefore easily found admission to the table of Hilarius, the celebrated orator, renowned equally for the extent of his knowledge, the elegance of his diction, and the acuteness of his wit. Hilarius received me with an appearance of great satisfaction, produced to me all his friends, and directed to me that part of his discourse in which he most endeavoured to display his imagination. I had now learned my own interest enough to supply him opportunities for smart remarks and gay sallies, which I never failed to echo and applaud. Thus I was gaining every hour on his affections, till unfortunately, when the assembly was more splendid, his desire of admiration prompted him to turn his raillery upon me. I bore it for some time with great submission, and success encouraged him to redouble his attacks; at last my vanity prevailed over my prudence, I retorted his irony with such spirit, that Hilarius, unaccustomed to resistance, was disconcerted, and soon found means of convincing me that his purpose was not to encourage a rival, but to foster a parasite.

I was then taken into the familiarity of Argutio, a nobleman eminent for judgment and criticism. He had contributed to my reputation by the praises which he had often bestowed upon my writings, in which he owned that there were proofs of a genius that might rise to high degress of excellence, when time or information had reduced its exuberance. He, therefore required me to consult him before the publication of any new performance, and commonly proposed innumerable alterations, without sufficient attention to the general design, or regard to my form of style, and mode of imagina-

tion. But these corrections he never failed to press as indispensably necessary, and thought the least delay of compliance an act of rebellion. The pride of an author made this treatment insufferable, and I thought any tyranny easier to be born than that which took from me the use of my understanding.

My next patron was Eutyches the statesman, who was wholly engaged in public affairs, and seemed to have no ambition but to be powerful and rich. I found his favour more permanent than that of the others; for there was a certain price at which it might be bought; he allowed nothing to humour, or to affection, but was always ready to pay liberally for the service that he required. His demands were, indeed, very often such as virtue could not easily consent to gratify; but virtue is not to be consulted when men are to raise their fortunes by the favour of the great. His measures were censured; I wrote in his defence, and was recompensed with a place, of which the profits were never received by me, without the pangs of remembering that they were the reward of wickedness,—a reward which nothing but that necessity which the consumption of my little estate in these wild pursuits had brought upon me, hindered me from throwing back in the face of my corrupter.

At this time my uncle died without a will, and I became heir to a small fortune. I had resolution to throw off the splendour which reproached me to myself, and retire to an humbler state, in which I am now endeavouring to recover the dignity of virtue, and hope to make some reparation for my crime and follies, by informing others, who may be led after the same pageants, that they are about to engage in a course of life, in which they are to purchase, by a thousand miseries, the privilege of repentance.

I am, &c.

EUBULUS.

No. 28. Saturday, June 19, 1750.

Illi mors gravis incubat,
Qui, notus nimis omnibus,
Ignotus moritur sibi. Seneca.

To him! alas! to him I fear,
The face of death will terrible appear,
Who in his life, flattering his senseless pride,
By being known to all the world beside,
Does not himself, when he is dying, know,
Nor what he is, nor whither he's to go. Cowley.

I have shown, in a late essay, to what errors men are hourly betrayed by a mistaken opinion of their own powers, and a negligent inspection of their own character. But as I then confined my observations to common occurrences and familliar scenes, I think it proper to inquire, how far a nearer acquaintance with ourselves is necessary to our preservation from crimes as well as follies, and how much the attentive study of our own minds may contribute to secure to us the approbation of that Being, to whom we are accountable for our thoughts and our actions, and whose favour must finally constitute our total happiness.

If it be reasonable to estimate the difficulty of any enterprise by frequent miscarriages, it may justly be concluded that it is not easy for a man to know himself, for wheresoever we turn our view, we shall find almost all with whom we converse so nearly as to judge of their sentiments, indulging more favourable conceptions of their own virtue than they have been able to impress upon others, and congratulating themselves upon degrees of excellence, which their fondest admirers cannot allow them to have attained.

Those representations of imaginary virtue are generally considered as arts of hypocrisy, and as snares laid for confidence and praise. But I believe the suspicion often unjust; those who thus propagate their own reputation, only extend the fraud by which they have been themselves deceived; for this failing is incident to numbers, who seem to live without designs, competitions, or pursuits; it appears on occasions which promise no accession of honour or of profit, and to persons from whom very little is to be hoped or feared. It is, indeed, not easy to tell how far we may be blinded by the love of ourselves, when we reflect how much a secondary passion can cloud our judgment, and how few faults a man, in the first raptures of love, can discover in the person or conduct of his mistress.

To lay open all the sources from which error flows in upon him who contemplates his own character, would require more exact knowledge of the human heart, than, perhaps, the most acute and laborious observers have acquired. And since falsehood may be diversified without end, it is not unlikely that every man admits an imposture in some respect peculiar to himself, as his views have been accidentally directed, or his ideas particularly combined.

Some fallacies, however, there are, more frequently insidious, which it may, perhaps, not be useless to detect; because, though they are gross, they may be fatal, and because nothing but attention is necessary to defeat them.

One sophism by which men persuade themselves that they have those virtues which they really want, is formed by the substitution of single acts for habits. A miser who once relieved a friend from the danger of a prison, suffers his imagination to dwell for ever upon his own heroic generosity; he yields his heart up to indignation at those who are blind to merit, or insensible to misery, and who can please themselves with the enjoyment of that wealth, which they never permit others to partake. From any censures of the world, or reproaches of his conscience, he has an appeal to action and to knowledge: and though his whole life is a course of rapacity and avarice, he concludes himself to be tender and liberal, because he has once performed an act of liberality and tenderness.

As a glass which magnifies objects by the approach of one end to the eye, lessens them by the application of the other, so vices are extenuated by the inversion of that fallacy, by which virtues are augmented. Those faults which we cannot conceal from our own notice, are considered, however frequent, not as habitual corruptions, or settled practices, but as casual failures, and single lapses. A man who has from year to year set his country to sale, either for the gratification of his ambition or resentment, confesses that the heat of party now and then betrays the severest virtue to measures that cannot be seriously defended. He that spends his days and nights in riot and debauchery, owns that his passions oftentimes overpower his resolutions. But each comforts himself that his faults are not without precedent, for the best and the wisest men have given way to the violence of sudden temptations.

There are men who always confound the praise of goodness with the practice, and who believe themselves mild and moderate, charitable and faithful, because they have exerted their eloquence in commendation of mildness, fidelity, and

other virtues. This is an error almost universal among those that converse much with dependents, with such whose fear or interest disposes them to a seeming reverence for any declamation, however enthusiastic, and submission to any boast, however arrogant. Having none to recall their attention to their lives, they rate themselves by the goodness of their opinions, and forget how much more easily men may show their virtue in their talk than in their actions.

The tribe is likewise very numerous of those who regulate their lives, not by the standard of religion, but the measure of other men's virtue; who lull their own remorse with the remembrance of crimes more atrocious than their own, and seem to believe that they are not bad while another can be found worse.

For escaping these and a thousand other deceits, many expedients have been proposed. Some have recommended the frequent consultation of a wise friend, admitted to intimacy, and encouraged to sincerity. But this appears a remedy by no means adapted to general use: for in order to secure the virtue of one, it presupposes more virtue in two than will generally be found. In the first, such a desire of rectitude and amendment, as may incline him to hear his own accusation from the mouth of him whom he esteems, and by whom, therefore, he will always hope that his faults are not discovered; and in the second, such zeal and honesty, as will make him content for his friend's advantage to lose his kindness.

A long life may be passed without finding a friend in whose understanding and virtue we can equally confide, and whose opinion we can value at once for its justness and sincerity. A weak man, however honest, is not qualified to judge. A man of the world, however penetrating, is not fit to counsel. Friends are often chosen for similitude of manners, and therefore each palliates the other's failings, because they are his own. Friends are tender, and unwilling to give pain, or they are interested and fearful to offend.

These objections have inclined others to advise, that he who would know himself should consult his enemies, remember the reproaches that are vented to his face, and listen for the censures that are uttered in private. For his great business is to know his faults, and those malignity will discover, and resentment will reveal. But this precept may be often frustrated; for it seldom happens that rivals or opponents are suffered to come near enough to know our conduct with so much exactness as that conscience should allow and reflect the accusation. The charge of an enemy is often totally false,

eagerly turn their thoughts upon the improvement of that which was before them; but surely those who are acquainted with the hopes and fears of eternity, might think it necessary to put some restraint upon their imaginations, and reflect that by echoing the songs of the ancient bacchanals, and transmitting the maxims of past debauchery, they not only prove that they want invention, but virtue, and submit to the servility of imitation only to copy that of which the writer, if he was to live now, would often be ashamed.

Yet as the errours and follies of a great genius are seldom without some radiations of understanding, by which meaner minds may be enlightened, the incitements to pleasure are, in those authors, generally mingled with such reflections upon life, as well deserve to be considered distinctly from the purposes for which they are produced, and to be treasured up as the settled conclusions of extensive observation, acute sagacity, and mature experience.

It is not without true judgment, that on these occasions they often warn their readers against inquiries into futurity, and solicitude about events which lie hid in causes yet unactive, and which time has not brought forward into the view of reason. An idle and thoughtless resignation to chance, without any struggle against calamity, or endeavour after advantage, is indeed below the dignity of a reasonable being, in whose power Providence has put a great part even of his present happiness; but it shows an equal ignorance of our proper sphere, to harass our thoughts with conjectures about things not yet in being. How can we regulate events, of which we yet know not whether they will ever happen? And why should we think, with painful anxiety, about that on which our thoughts can have no influence?

It is a maxim commonly received, that a wise man is never surprised; and perhaps, this exemption from astonishment may be imagined to proceed from such a prospect into futurity, as gave previous intimation of those evils which often fall unexpected upon others that have less foresight. But the truth is, that things to come, except when they approach very nearly, are equally hidden from men of all degrees of understanding; and if a wise man is not amazed at sudden occurrences, it is not that he has thought more, but less upon futurity. He never considered things not yet existing as the proper objects of his attention; he never indulged dreams till he was deceived by their phantoms, nor ever realized nonentities to his mind. He is not surprised because he is not disappointed, and he escapes disappointment because he never forms any expectations.

The concern about things to come, that is so justly censured, is not the result of those general reflections on the variableness of fortune, the uncertainty of life, and the universal insecurity of all human acquisitions, which must always be suggested by the view of the world; but such a desponding anticipation of misfortune, as fixes the mind upon scenes of gloom and melancholy, and makes fear predominate in every imagination.

Anxiety of this kind is nearly of the same nature with jealousy in love, and suspicion in the general commerce of life; a temper which keeps the man always in alarm; disposes him to judge of every thing in the manner that least favours his own quiet, fills him with perpetual stratagems of counteraction, wears him out in schemes to obviate evils which never threatened him, and at length, perhaps, contributes to the production of those mischiefs of which it had raised such dreadful apprehensions.

It has been usual in all ages for moralists to repress the swellings of vain hope, by representations of the innumerable casualties to which life is subject, and by instances of the unexpected defeat of the wisest schemes of policy, and sudden subversions of the highest eminences of greatness. It has, perhaps, not been equally observed, that all these examples afford the proper antidote to fear as well as to hope, and may be applied with no less efficacy as consolations to the timorous, than as restraint to the proud.

Evil is uncertain in the same degree as good, and for the reason that we ought not to hope too securely, we ought not to fear with too much dejection. The state of the world is continually changing, and none can tell the result of the next vicissitude. Whatever is afloat in the stream of time, may, when it is very near us, be driven away by an accidental blast, which shall happen to cross the general course of the current. The sudden accidents by which the powerful are depressed, may fall upon those whose malice we fear; and the greatness by which we expect to be overborn, may become another proof of the false flatteries of fortune. Our enemies may become weak, or we grow strong before our encounter, or we may advance against each other without ever meeting. There are, indeed, natural evils which we can flatter ourselves with no hopes of escaping, and with little of delaying; but of the ills which are apprehended from human malignity, or the opposition of rival interests, we may always alleviate the terrour by considering that our persecutors are weak and ignorant, and mortal like ourselves.

The misfortunes which arise from the concurrence of un-

happy incidents should never disturb us before they happen; because, if the breast be once laid open to the dread of mere possibilities of misery, life must be given a prey to dismal solicitude, and quiet must be lost for ever.

It is remarked by old Cornaro, that it is absurd to be afraid of the natural dissolution of the body, because it must certainly happen, and can, by no caution or artifice, be avoided. Whether this sentiment be entirely just, I shall not examine; but certainly if it be improper, to fear events which must happen, it is yet more evidently contrary to right reason to fear those which may never happen, and which, if they should come upon us, we cannot resist.

As we ought not to give way to fear, any more than indulgence to hope, because the objects both of fear and hope are yet uncertain, so we ought not to trust the representations of one more than of another, because they are both equally fallacious; as hope enlarges happiness, fear aggravates calamity. It is generally allowed, that no man ever found the happiness of possession proportionate to that expectation which incited his desire, and invigorated his pursuit; nor has any man found the evils of life so formidable in reality, as they were described to him by his own imagination; every species of distress brings with it some peculiar supports, some unforeseen means of resisting, or power of enduring. Taylor justly blames some pious persons, who indulge their fancies too much, set themselves, by the force of imagination, in the place of the ancient martyrs and confessors, and questions the validity of their own faith, because they shrink at the thoughts of flames and tortures. It is, says he, sufficient that you are able to encounter the temptations which now assault you; when God sends trials, he may send strength.

All fear is in itself painful, and when it conduces not to safety is painful without use. Every consideration, therefore, by which groundless terrours may be removed, adds something to human happiness. It is likewise not unworthy of remark, that in proportion as our cares are employed upon the future they are abstracted from the present, from the only time which we can call our own, and of which if we neglect the apparent duties, to make provision against visionary attacks, we shall certainly counteract our own purpose: for he, doubtless, mistakes his true interest, who thinks that he can increase his safety when he impairs his virtue.

No. 30. Saturday, June 30, 1750.

——Vultus ubi tuus
Affulsit populo, gratior it dies,
Et soles melius nitent. Hor.

Whene'er thy countenance divine
Th' attendant people cheers,
The genial suns more radiant shine,
The day more glad appears. Elphinston.

Mr. Rambler—There are few tasks more ungrateful than for persons of modesty to speak their own praises. In some cases, however, this must be done for the general good, and a generous spirit will on such occasions assert its merit, and vindicate itself with becoming warmth.

My circumstances, sir, are very hard and peculiar. Could the world be brought to treat me as I deserve, it would be a public benefit. This makes me apply to you, that my case being fairly stated in a paper so generally esteemed, I may suffer no longer from ignorant and childish prejudices.

My elder brother was a Jew; a very respectable person, but somewhat austere in his manner: highly and deservedly valued by his near relations and intimates, but utterly unfit for mixing in a large society, or gaining a general acquaintance among mankind. In a venerable old age he retired from the world, and I in the bloom of youth came into it, succeeding him in all his dignities, and formed, as I might reasonably flatter myself, to be the object of universal love and esteem. Joy and gladness were born with me; cheerfulness, good humour, and benevolence, always attended and endeared my infancy. That time is long past. So long, that idle imaginations are apt to fancy me wrinkled, old, and disagreeable; but, unless my looking-glass deceives me, I have not yet lost one charm, one beauty of my earliest years. However, thus far is too certain, I am to every body just what they choose to think me, so that to very few I appear in my right shape; and though naturally I am the friend of human kind, to few, very few comparatively, am I useful or agreeable.

This is the more grievous, as it is utterly impossible for me to avoid being in all sorts of places and companies; and I am therefore liable to meet with perpetual affronts and injuries. Though I have as natural an antipathy to cards and dice, as some people have to a cat, many and many an assembly am I forced to endure; and though rest and composure

are my peculiar joy, am worn out and harassed to death with journeys by men and women of quality, who never take one but when I can be of the party. Some, on a contrary extreme, will never receive me but in bed, where they spend at least half of the time I have to stay with them; and others are so monstrously ill bred as to take physic on purpose when they have reason to expect me. Those who keep upon terms of more politeness with me, are generally so cold and constrained in their behaviour, that I cannot but perceive myself an unwelcome guest; and even among persons deserving of esteem, and who certainly have a value for me, it is too evident that generally whenever I come I throw a dulness over the whole company, that I am entertained with a formal stiff civility, and that they are glad when I am fairly gone.

How bitter must this kind of reception be to one formed to inspire delight, admiration, and love! To one capable of answering and rewarding the greatest warmth and delicacy of sentiments!

I was bred up among a set of excellent people, who affectionately loved me, and treated me with the utmost honour and respect. It would be tedious to relate the variety of my adventures, and strange vicissitudes of my fortune in many different countries. Here in England there was a time when I lived according to my heart's desire. Whenever I appeared, public assemblies appointed for my reception were crowded with persons of quality and fashion, early drest as for a court, to pay me their devoirs. Cheerful hospitality every where crowned my board, and I was looked upon in every country parish as a kind of social bond between the 'squire, the parson, and the tenants. The laborious poor every where blest my appearance: they do so still, and keep their best clothes to do me honour; though as much as I delight in the honest country folks, they do now and then throw a pot of ale at my head, and sometimes an unlucky boy will drive his cricket ball full in my face.

Even in these my best days there were persons who thought me too demure and grave. I must forsooth by all means be instructed by foreign masters, and taught me to dance and play. This method of education was so contrary to my genius, formed for much nobler entertainments, that it did not succeed at all.

I fell next into the hands of a very different set. They were so excessively scandalized at the gaiety of my appearance, as not only to despoil me of the foreign fopperies, the paint and the patches that I had been tricked out with by my last misjudging tutors, but they robbed me of every innocent

ornament I had from my infancy been used to gather in the fields and gardens; nay, they blacked my face, and covered me all over with a habit of mourning, and that too very coarse and awkward. I was now obliged to spend my whole life in hearing sermons; nor permitted so much as to smile upon any occasion.

In this melancholy disguise I became a perfect bugbear to all children, and young folks. Wherever I came there was a general hush, and immediate stop to all pleasantness of look or discourse; and not being permitted to talk with them in my own language at that time, they took such a disgust to me in those tedious hours of yawning, that having transmitted it to their children, I cannot now be heard, though it is long since I have recovered my natural form, and pleasing tone of voice. Would they but receive my visits kindly, and listen to what I could tell them—let me say it without vanity—how charming a companion should I be! to every one could I talk on the subjects most interesting and most pleasing. With the great and ambitious, I would discourse of honours and advancements, of distinctions to which the whole world should be witness, of unenvied dignities and durable preferments. To the rich I would tell of inexhaustible treasures, and the sure method to attain them. I would teach them to put out their money on the best interest, and instruct the lovers of pleasure how to secure and improve it to the highest degree. The beauty should learn of me how to preserve an everlasting bloom. To the afflicted I would administer comfort, and relaxation to the busy.

As I dare promise myself you will attest the truth of all I have advanced, there is no doubt but many will be desirous of improving their acquaintance with me; and that I may not be thought too difficult, I will tell you, in short, how I wish to be received.

You must know I equally hate lazy idleness and hurry. I would every where be welcomed at a tolerably early hour, with decent good-humour and gratitude. I must be attended in the great halls, peculiarly appropriated to me, with respect; but I do not insist upon finery: propriety of appearance, and perfect neatness, is all I require. I must at dinner be treated with a temperate, but cheerful social meal; both the neighbours and the poor should be the better for me. Some time I must have *tete-a-tete* with my kind entertainers, and the rest of my visit should be spent in pleasant walks and airings among sets of agreeable people, in such discourse as I shall naturally dictate, or in reading some few selected out of those numberless books that are dedicated to me, and go by my

name. A name that, alas! as the world stands at present, makes them oftener thrown aside than taken up. As those conversations and books should be both well chosen, to give some advice on that head may possibly furnish you with a future paper, and any thing you shall offer on my behalf will be of great service to,

Good Mr. Rambler

Your faithful Friend and Servant,

STUDAY.*

No. 31. TUESDAY, July 3, 1750.

Non ego mendax os ausim defendere moris,
Falsaque pro vitiis arma tenere meis. OVID.

Corrupted manners I shall ne'er defend;
Nor, falsely witty, for my faults contend. ELPHINSTON.

THOUGH the fallibility of man's reason, and the narrowness of his knowledge, are very liberally confessed, yet the conduct of those who so willingly admit the weakness of human nature, seems to discover that this acknowledgment is not altogether sincere; at least, that most make it with a tacit reserve in favour of themselves, and that with whatever ease they give up the claim of their neighbours, they are desirous of being thought exempt from faults in their own conduct, and from errour in their opinions.

The certain and obstinate oppositions, which we may observe made to confutation however clear, and to reproof however tender is an undoubted argument, that some dormant privilege is thought to be attacked; for as no man can lose what he neither possesses, nor imagines himself to possess, or be defrauded of that to which he has no right, it is reasonable to suppose that those who break out into fury as the softest contradiction, or the slightest censure, since they apparently conclude themselves injured, must fancy some ancient immunity violated, or some natural prerogative invaded. To be mistaken, if they thought themselves liable to mistake, could not be considered either as shameful or wonderful, and they would not receive with so much emotion intelligence which only informed them of what they knew before, nor struggle

* This paper was written by Miss Catherine Talbot, daughter of the Rev. Edward Talbot, Archdeacon of Berks, and Preacher at the Rolls. She died Jan. 9, 1770. See Preface to the RAMBLER, in "BRITISH ESSAYISTS," vol. 19. C.

with such earnestness against an attack that deprived them of nothing to which they held themselves entitled.

It is related of one of the Philosophers, that when an account was brought him of his son's death, he received it only with this reflection, "I know that my son was mortal." He that is convinced of an errour, if he had the same knowledge of his own weakness, would, instead of straining for artifices, and brooding malignity, only regard such oversights, as the appendages of humanity, and pacify himself with considering that he had always known man to be a fallible being.

If it be true that most of our passions are excited by the novelty of objects, there is little reason for doubting, that to be considered as subject to fallacies of ratiocination, or imperfection of knowledge, is to a great part of mankind entirely new; for it is impossible to fall into any company where there is not some regular and established subordination, without finding rage and vehemence produced only by difference of sentiments about things in which neither of the disputants have any other interest, than what proceeds from their mutual unwillingness to give way to any opinion that may bring upon them the disgrace of being wrong.

I have heard of one that, having advanced some erroneous doctrines in philosophy, refused to see the experiments by which they were confuted: and the observation of every day will give new proofs with how much industry subterfuges and evasions are sought to decline the pressure of resistless arguments, how often the state of the question is altered, how often the antagonist is wilfully misrepresented, and in how much perplexity the clearest positions are involved by those whom they happen to oppose.

Of all mortals none seem to have been more infected with this species of vanity, than the race of writers, whose reputation arising solely from their understanding, gives them a very delicate sensibility of any violence attempted on their literary honours. It is not unpleasing to remark with what solicitude men of acknowledged abilities will endeavour to palliate absurdities and reconcile contradictions, only to obviate criticisms to which all human performances must ever be exposed, and from which they can never suffer, but when they teach the world, by a vain and ridiculous impatience, to think them of importance.

Dryden, whose warmth of fancy, and haste of composition, very frequently hurried him into inaccuracies, heard himself sometimes exposed to ridicule for having said in one of his tragedies,

I follow fate, which does too fast pursue.

That no man could at once follow and be followed, was, it may be thought, too plain to be long disputed; and the truth is, that *Dryden* was apparently betrayed into the blunder by the double meaning of the word *Fate*, to which in the former part of the verse he had annexed the idea of *Fortune*, and in the latter that of *Death*; so that the sense only was, though pursued by Death, I will not resign myself to despair, but will follow Fortune, and do and suffer what is appointed. This, however, was not completely expressed, and *Dryden* being determined not to give way to his critics, never confessed that he had been surprised by an ambiguity; but finding luckily in Virgil an account of a man moving in a circle, with this expression, *Et se sequiturque fugitique*, "Here," says he, "is the passage in imitation of which I wrote the line that my critics were pleased to condemn as nonsense; not but I may sometimes write nonsense, though they have not the fortune to find it."

Every body sees the folly of such mean doublings to escape the pursuit of criticism; nor is there a single reader of this poet, who would not have paid him greater veneration, had he shown consciousness enough of his own superiority to set such cavils at defiance, and owned that he sometimes slipped into errours by the tumult of his imagination, and the multitude of his ideas.

It is happy when this temper discovers itself only in little things, which may be right or wrong without any influence on the virtue or happiness of mankind. We may, with very little inquietude, see a man persist in a project which he has found to be impracticable, live in an inconvenient house, because it was contrived by himself, or wear a coat of a particular cut, in hopes by perseverance to bring it into fashion. These are indeed follies, but they are only follies, and, however wild or ridiculous, can very little affect others.

But such pride, once indulged, too frequently operates upon more important objects, and inclines men not only to vindicate their errors, but their vices; to persist in practices which their own hearts condemn, only lest they should seem to feel reproaches, or be made wiser by the advice of others; or to search for sophisms tending to the confusion of all principles, and the evacuation of all duties, that they may not appear to act what they are not able to defend.

Let every man, who finds vanity so far predominant, as to betray him to the danger of this last degree of corruption, pause a moment to consider what will be the consequences of the plea which he is about to offer for a practice to which he knows himself not led at first by reason, but impelled by

the violence of desire, surprised by the suddenness of passion, or seduced by the soft approaches of temptation, and by imperceptible gradations of guilt. Let him consider what he is going to commit, by forcing his understanding to patronise those appetites, which it is its chief business to hinder and reform.

The cause of virtue requires so little art to defend it, and good and evil, when they have been once shown, are so easily distinguished, that such apologists seldom gain proselytes to their party, nor have their fallacies power to deceive any but those whose desires have clouded their discernment. All that the best faculties thus employed can perform is, to persuade the hearers that the man is hopeless whom they only thought vicious, that corruption has passed from his manners to his principles, that all endeavours for his recovery are without prospect of success, and that nothing remains but to avoid him as infectious, or hunt him down as destructive.

But if it be supposed that he may impose on his audience by partial representations of consequences, intricate deductions of remote causes, or perplexed combinations of ideas, which, having various relations, appear different as viewed on different sides; that he may sometimes puzzle the weak and well meaning, and now and then seduce, by the admiration of his abilities, a young mind still fluctuating in unsettled notions, and neither fortified by instruction, nor enlightened by experience; yet what must be the event of such a triumph! A man cannot spend all his life in frolic: age or disease, or solitude, will bring some hours of serious consideration, and it will then afford no comfort to think, that he has extended the dominion of vice, that he has loaded himself with the crimes of others, and can never know the extent of his own wickedness, or make reparation for the mischief that he has caused. There is not, perhaps, in all the stores of ideal anguish, a thought more painful, than the consciousness of having propagated corruption by vitiating principles, of having not only drawn others from the paths of virtue, but blocked up the way by which they should return, of having blinded them to every beauty but the paint of pleasure, and deafened them to every call but the alluring voice of the syrens of destruction.

There is yet another danger in this practice: men who cannot deceive others, are very often successful in deceiving themselves; they weave their sophistry till their own reason is entangled, and repeat their positions till they are credited by themselves; by often contending, they grow sincere in

the cause; and by long wishing for demonstrative arguments, they at last bring themselves to fancy that they have found them. They are then at the uttermost verge of wickedness, and may die without having the light rekindled in their minds, which their own pride and contumacy have extinguished.

The men who can be charged with fewest failings, either with respect to abilities or virtue, are generally most ready to allow them; for, not to dwell on things of solemn and awful consideration, the humility of confessors, the tears of saints. and the dying terrours of persons eminent for piety and innocence, it is well known that Cæsar wrote an account of the errours committed by him in his wars of Gaul, and that Hippocrates, whose name is perhaps in rational estimation greater than Cæsars, warned posterity against a mistake into which he had fallen. "So much," says Celsus, "does the open and artless confession of an errour become a man, conscious that he had enough remaining to support his character."

As all errour is meanness, it is incumbent on every man who consults his own dignity, to retract it as soon as he discovers it, without fearing any censure so much as that of of his own mind. As justice requires that all injuries should be repaired, it is the duty of him who has seduced others by bad practices or false notions, to endeavour that such as have adopted his errours should know his retraction, and that those who have learned vice by his example, should by his example be taught amendment.

No. 32. Saturday, July 7, 1750.

Οσσά τε δαιμονίῃσι τύχαις βροτοὶ ἄλγε ἔχουσιν,
Ὧν ἅν μοῖραν ἔχῃς, ὥραως φέρε, μηδ' ἀγανάκτει·
Ἰᾶσθαι δὲ πρέπει κάθοσον δυνῃ. Pythag.

Of all the woes that load the mortal state,
Whate'er thy portion, mildly meet thy fate;
But ease it as thou can'st——— Elphinston.

So large a part of human life passes in a state contrary to our natural desires, that one of the principal topics of moral instruction is the art of bearing calamities. And such is the certainty of evil, that it is the duty of every man to furnish

his mind with those principles that may enable him to act under it with decency and propriety.

The sect of ancient philosophers, that boasted to have carried this necessary science to the highest perfection, where the stoics, or scholars of Zeno, whose wild enthusiastic virtue pretended to an exemption from the sensibilities of unenlightened mortals, and who proclaimed themselves exalted, by the doctrines of their sect, above the reach of those miseries which embitter life to the rest of the world. They therefore removed pain, poverty, loss of friends, exile, and violent death, from the catalogue of evils; and passed, in their haughty style, a kind of irreversible decree, by which they forbade them to be counted any longer among the objects of terrour or anxiety, or to give any disturbance to the tranquillity of a wise man.

This edict was, I think, not universally observed; for though one of the more resolute, when he was tortured by a violent disease, cried out, that let pain harass him to its utmost power, it should never force him to consider it as other than indifferent and neutral; yet all had not stubbornness to hold out against their senses: for a weaker pupil of Zeno is recorded to have confessed in the anguish of the gout, that *he now found pain to be an evil.*

It may however be questioned, whether these philosophers can be very properly numbered among the teachers of patience; for if pain be not an evil, there seems no instruction requisite how it may be born; and therefore, when they endeavour to arm their followers with arguments against it, they may be thought to have given up their first position. But such inconsistencies are to be expected from the greatest understandings, when they endeavour to grow eminent by singularity, and employ their strength in establishing opinions opposite to nature.

The controversy about the reality of external evils is now at an end. That life has many miseries, and that those miseries are, sometimes at least, equal to all the powers of fortitude, is now universally confessed; and therefore it is useful to consider not only how we may escape them, but by what means those which either the accidents of affairs, or the infirmities of nature, must bring upon us, may be mitigated and lightened, and how we may make those hours less wretched, which the condition of our present existence will not allow to be very happy.

The cure for the greatest part of human miseries is not radical, but palliative. Infelicity is involved in corporeal nature, and interwoven with our being; all attempts therefore

to decline it wholly are useless and vain: The armies of pain send their arrows against us on every side, the choice is only between those which are more or less sharp, or tinged with poison of greater or less malignity; and the strongest armour which reason can supply, will only blunt their points but cannot repel them.

The great remedy which heaven has put in our hands is patience, by which, though we cannot lessen the torments of the body, we can in a great measure preserve the peace of the mind, and shall suffer only the natural and genuine force of an evil, without heightening its acrimony, or prolonging its effects.

There is indeed nothing more unsuitable to the nature of man in any calamity than rage and turbulence, which, without examining whether they are not sometimes impious, are at least always offensive, and incline others rather to hate and despise than to pity and assist us. If what we suffer has been brought upon us by ourselves, it is observed by an ancient poet, that patience is eminently our duty, since no one should be angry at feeling that which he has deserved.

Leniter ex merito quicquid patiare ferendum est.

Let pain deserv'd without complaint be born.

And surely, if we are conscious that we have not contributed to our own sufferings, if punishment falls upon innocence, or disappointment happens to industry and prudence. patience, whether more necessary or not, is much easier, since our pain is then without aggravation, and we have not the bitterness of remorse to add to the asperity of misfortune.

In those evils which are allotted to us by Providence, such as deformity, privation of any of the senses, or old age, it is always to be remembered that impatience can have no present effect, but to deprive us of the consolations which our condition admits, by driving away from us those by whose conversation or advice we might be amused or helped; and that with regard to futurity it is yet less to be justified, since, without lessening the pain, it cuts off the hope of that reward, which he, by whom it is inflicted, will confer upon them that bear it well.

In all evils which admit a remedy, impatience is to be avoided, because it wastes that time and attention in complaints, that, if properly applied, might remove the cause. Turenne, among the acknowledgements which he used to pay in conversation to the memory of those by whom he had been instructed in the art of war, mentioned one with honour, who

taught him not to spend his time in regretting any mistake which he had made, but to set himself immediately and vigorously to repair it.

Patience and submission are very carefully to be distinguished from cowardice and indolence. We are not to repine, but we may lawfully struggle; for the calamities of life, like the necessities of nature, are calls to labour and exercises of diligence. When we feel any pressure of distress, we are not to conclude that we can only obey the will of heaven by languishing under it, any more than when we perceive the pain of thirst, we are to imagine that water is prohibited. Of misfortune it never can be certainly known whether, as proceeding from the hand of God, it is an act of favour or of punishment: but since all the ordinary dispensations of Providence are to be interpreted according to the general analogy of things, we may conclude that we have a right to remove one inconvenience as well as another; that we are only to take care lest we purchase ease with guilt; and that our Maker's purpose, whether of reward or severity, will be answered by the labours which he lays us under the necessity of performing.

This duty is not more difficult in any state than in diseases intensely painful, which may indeed suffer such exacerbations as seem to strain the powers of life to their utmost stretch, and leave very little of the attention vacant to precept or reproof. In this state the nature of man requires some indulgence, and every extravagance but impiety may be easily forgiven him. Yet, lest we should think ourselves too soon entitled to the mournful privileges of irresistible misery, it is proper to reflect, that the utmost anguish which human wit can contrive, or human malice can inflict, has been born with constancy; and that if the pains of disease be, as I believe they are, sometimes greater than those of artificial torture, they are therefore in their own nature shorter: the vital frame is quickly broken, or the union between soul and body is for a time suspended by insensibility, and we soon cease to feel our maladies when they once become too violent to be born. I think there is some reason for questioning whether the body and mind are not so proportioned, that the one can bear all that can be inflicted on the other, whether virtue cannot stand its ground as long as life, and whether a soul well principled will not be separated sooner than subdued.

In calamities which operate chiefly on our passions, such as diminution of fortune, loss of friends, or declension of character, the chief danger of impatience is upon the first attack, and many expedients have been contrived, by which

the blow may be broken. Of these the most general precept is, not to take pleasure in any thing of which it is not in our power to secure the possession to ourselves. This counsel, when we consider the enjoyment of any terrestrial advantage, as opposite to a constant and habitual solicitude for future felicity, is undoubtedly just, and delivered by that authority which cannot be disputed; but in any other sense, is it not like advice, not to walk lest we should stumble, or not to see lest our eyes should light upon deformity? It seems to me reasonable to enjoy blessings with confidence, as well as to resign them with submission, and to hope for the continuance of good which we possess without insolence or voluptuousness, as for the restitution of that which we lose without despondency or murmurs.

The chief security against the fruitless anguish of impatience, must arise from frequent reflection on the wisdom and goodness of the God of nature, in whose hands are riches and poverty, honour and disgrace, pleasure and pain, and life and death. A settled conviction of the tendency of every thing to our good, and of the possibility of turning miseries into happiness, by receiving them rightly, will incline us to *bless the name of the* LORD, *whether he gives or takes away.*

No. 33. TUESDAY, July 10, 1750.

Quod caret alterna requie durabile non est. OVID.

Alternate rest and labour long endure.

IN the early ages of the world, as is well known to those who are versed in ancient traditions, when innocence was yet untainted, and simplicity unadulterated, mankind was happy in the enjoyment of continual pleasure, and constant plenty, under the protection of *Rest*; a gentle divinity, who required of her worshippers neither altars nor sacrifices, and whose rites were only performed by prostrations upon turfs of flowers in shades of jasmine and myrtle, or by dances on the banks of rivers flowing with milk and nectar.

Under this easy government the first generations breathed the fragrance of perpetual spring, ate the fruits, which, without culture, fell ripe into their hands, and slept under bowers arched by nature, with the birds singing over their heads, and the beasts sporting about them. But by degrees they began to lose their original integrity; each, though there was

more than enough for all, was desirous of appropriating part to himself. Then entered violence and fraud, and theft and rapine. Soon after pride and envy broke into the world, and brought with them a new standard of wealth; for men, who till then thought themselves rich when they wanted nothing, now rated their demands, not by the calls of nature, but by the plenty of others; and began to consider themselves as poor, when they beheld their own possessions exceeded by those of their neighbours. Now only one could be happy, because only one could have most, and that one was always in danger, lest the same arts by which he had supplanted others should be practised upon himself.

Amidst the prevalence of this corruption, the state of the earth was changed; the year was divided into seasons; part of the ground became barren, and the rest yielded only berries, acorns, and herbs. The summer and autumn indeed furnished a coarse and inelegant sufficiency, but winter was without any relief; *Famine*, with a thousand diseases which the inclemency of the air invited into the upper regions, made havoc among men, and there appeared to be danger lest they should be destroyed before they were reformed.

To oppose the devastations of *Famine*, who scattered the ground every where with carcases, *Labour* came down upon earth. *Labour* was the son of *Necessity*, the nursling of *Hope*, and the pupil of *Art*; he had the strength of his mother, the spirit of his nurse, and the dexterity of his governess. His face was wrinkled with the wind, and swarthy with the sun; he had the implements of husbandry in one hand, with which he turned up the earth; in the other he had the tools of architecture, and raised walls and towers at his pleasure. He called out with a rough voice, "Mortals! see here the power to whom you are consigned, and from whom you are to hope for all your pleasures, and all your safety. You have long languished under the dominion of *Rest*, an impotent and deceitful goddess, who can neither protect nor relieve you, but resigns you to the first attacks of either *Famine* or *Disease*, and suffers her shades to be invaded by every enemy, and destroyed by every accident.

"Awake therefore to the call of *Labour*. I will teach you to remedy the sterility of the earth, and the severity of the sky; I will compel summer to find provision for the winter; I will force the waters to give you their fish, the air its fowls, and the forest its beasts; I will teach you to pierce the bowels of the earth, and bring out from the caverns of the mountains metals which shall give strength to your hands, and security to your bodies, by which you may be covered from the

assaults of the fiercest beasts, and with which you shall fell the oak, and divide rocks, and subject all nature to your use and pleasure."

Encouraged by this magnificent invitation, the inhabitants of the globe considered *Labour* as their only friend, and hasted to his command. He led them out to the fields and mountains, and showed them how to open mines, to level hills, to drain marshes, and change the course of rivers. The face of things was immediately transformed; the land was covered with towns and villages, encompassed with fields of corn, and plantations of fruit-trees; and nothing was seen but heaps of grain, and baskets of fruit, full tables, and crowded storehouoses.

Thus *Labour* and his followers added every hour new acquisitions to their conquests, and saw *Famine* gradually dispossessed of his dominions; till at last, amidst their jollity and triumphs, they were depressed and amazed by the approach of *Lassitude*, who was known by her sunk eyes and dejected countenance. She came forward trembling and groaning: at every groan the hearts of all those that beheld her lost their courage, their nerves slackened, their hands shook, and the instruments of labour fell from their grasp.

Shocked with this horrid phantom, they reflected with regret on their easy compliance with the solicitations of *Labour*, and began to wish again for the golden hours which they remembered to have passed under the reign of *Rest*, whom they resolved again to visit, and to whom they intended to dedicate the remaining part of their lives. *Rest* had not left the world; they quickly found her, and to atone for their former desertion, invited her to the enjoyment of those acquisitions which *Labour* had procured them.

Rest therefore took leave of the groves and vallies, which she had hitherto inhabited, and entered into palaces, reposed herself in alcoves, and slumbered away the winter upon beds of down, and the summer in artificial grottos with cascades playing before her. There was indeed always something wanting to complete her felicity, and she could never lull her returning fugitives to that serenity which they knew before their engagements with *Labour:* Nor was her dominion entirely without control, for she was obliged to share it with *Luxury*, though she always looked upon her as a false friend, by whom her influence was in reality destroyed, while it seemed to be promoted.

The two soft associates, however, reigned for some time without visible disagreement, till at last *Luxury* betrayed her charge, and let in *Disease* to seize upon her worshippers.

Rest then flew away, and left the place to the usurpers; who employed all their arts to fortify themselves in their possession, and to strengthen the interest of each other.

Rest had not always the same enemy: in some places she escaped the incursions of *Disease;* but had her residence invaded by a more slow and subtle intruder, for very frequently, when every thing was composed and quiet, when there was neither pain within, nor danger without, when every flower was in bloom, and every gale freighted with perfumes, *Satiety* would enter with a languishing and repining look, and throw herself upon the couch placed and adorned for the accommodation of *Rest.* No sooner was she seated than a general gloom spread itself on every side, the groves immediately lost their verdure, and their inhabitants desisted from their melody, the breeze sunk in sighs, and the flowers contracted their leaves, and shut up their odours. Nothing was seen on every side but multitudes wandering about they knew not whither, in quest they knew not of what; no voice was heard but of complaints that mentioned no pain, and murmurs that could tell of no misfortune.

Rest had now lost her authority. Her followers again began to treat her with contempt; some of them united themselves more closely to *Luxury,* who promised by her arts to drive *Satiety* away; and others, that were more wise, or had more fortitude, went back again to *Labour,* by whom they were indeed protected from *Satiety,* but delivered up in time to *Lassitude,* and forced by her to the bowers of *Rest.*

Thus *Rest* and *Labour* equally perceived their reign of short duration and uncertain tenure, and their empire liable to inroads from those who were alike enemies to both. They each found their subjects unfaithful, and ready to desert them upon every opportunity. *Labour* saw the riches which he had given always carried away as an offering to *Rest,* and *Rest* found her votaries in every exigence flying from her to beg help of *Labour.* They, therefore, at last determined upon an interview, in which they agreed to divide the world between them, and govern it alternately, allotting the dominion of the day to one, and that of the night to the other, and promised to guard the frontiers of each other, so that, whenever hostilities were attempted, *Satiety* should be intercepted by *Labour,* and *Lassitude* expelled by *Rest.* Thus the ancient quarrel was appeased, and as hatred is often succeeded by its contrary, *Rest* afterwards became pregnant by *Labour,* and was delivered of *Health,* a benevolent goddess, who consolidated the union of her parents, and contributed to the regular vicissitudes of their reign, by dispensing her gifts to

those only who shared their lives in just proportions between *Rest* and *Labour*.

No. 34. Saturday, July 14, 1750.

——Non sive vano
Aurarum et silvæ metu.—— Hor.

Alarm'd with ev'ry rising gale,
In ev'ry wood, in ev'ry vale. Elphinston.

I have been censured for having hitherto dedicated so few of my speculations to the ladies; and indeed the moralist, whose instructions are accommodated only to one half of the human species, must be confessed not sufficiently to have extended his views. Yet it is to be considered, that masculine duties afford more room for counsels and observations, as they are less uniform, and connected with things more subject to vicissitude and accident; we therefore find that in philosophical discourses which teach by precept, or historical narratives that instruct by example, the peculiar virtues or faults of women fill but a small part; perhaps generally too small, for so much of our domestic happiness is in their hands, and their influence is so great upon our earliest years, that the universal interest of the world requires them to be well instructed in their province: nor can it be thought proper that the qualities by which so much pain or pleasure may be given, should be left to the direction of chance.

I have, therefore, willingly given a place in my paper to a letter, which perhaps may not be wholly useless to them whose chief ambition is to please, as it shows how certainly the end is missed by absurd and injudicious endeavours at distinction.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—I am a young gentleman at my own disposal, with a considerable estate; and having passed through the common forms of education, spent some time in foreign countries, and made myself distinguished since my return in the politest company, I am now arrived at that part of life in which every man is expected to settle, and provide for the continuation of his lineage. I withstood for some time the solicitations and remonstrances of my aunts and uncles, but at last was per-

suaded to visit Anthea, an heiress, whose land lies contiguous to mine, and whose birth and beauty are without objection. Our friends declared that we were born for each other: all those on both sides who had no interest in hindering our union, contributed to promote it, and were conspiring to hurry us into matrimony, before we had an opportunity of knowing one another. I was, however, too old to be given away without my own consent; and having happened to pick up an opinion, which to many of my relations seemed extremely odd, that a man might be unhappy with a large estate, determined to obtain a nearer knowledge of the person with whom I was to pass the remainder of my time. To protract the courtship was by no means difficult, for Anthea had a wonderful facility of evading questions which I seldom repeated, and of barring approaches which I had no great eagerness to press.

Thus the time passed away in visits and civilities, without ardent professions of love, or formal offers of settlements. I often attended her to public places, in which, as is well known, all behaviour is so much regulated by custom, that very little insight can be gained into the private character, and therefore I was not yet able to inform myself of her humour and inclinations.

At last I ventured to propose to her to make one of a small party, and spend a day in viewing a seat and gardens a few miles distant; and having, upon her compliance, collected the rest of the company, I brought at the hour, a coach which I had borrowed from an acquaintance, having delayed to buy one myself, till I should have an opportunity of taking the lady's opinion for whose use it was intended. Anthea came down, but as she was going to step into the coach, started back with great appearance of terrour, and told us that she durst not enter, for the shocking colour of the lining had so much the air of the mourning coach in which she followed her aunt's funeral three years before, that she should never have her poor dear aunt out of her head.

I knew that it was not for lovers to argue with their mistresses; I therefore sent back the coach, and got another more gay. Into this we all entered, the coachman began to drive, and we were amusing ourselves with the expectation of what we should see, when, upon a small inclination of the carriage, Anthea screamed out, that we were overthrown. We were obliged to fix all our attention upon her, which she took care to keep up, by renewing her outcries at every corner where we had occasion to turn; at intervals she entertained us with fretful complaints of the uneasiness of the coach, and

obliged me to call several times on the coachman to take care and drive without jolting. The poor fellow endeavoured to please us, and therefore moved very slowly, till Anthea found out that this pace would keep us longer on the stones, and desired that I would order him to make more speed. He whipped his horses, the coach jolted again, and Anthea very complaisantly told us how much she repented that she made one of our company.

At last we got into the smooth road, and began to think our difficulties at an end, when, on a sudden, Anthea saw a brook before us, which she could not venture to pass. We were, therefore obliged to alight, that we might walk over the bridge; but when we came to it we found it so narrow, that Anthea durst not set her foot upon it, and was content, after long consultation, to call the coach back, and with innumerable precautions, terrours, and lamentations, crossed the brook.

It was necessary after this delay, to amend our pace, and directions were accordingly given to the coachman, when Anthea informed us, that it was common for the axle to catch fire with a quick motion, and begged of me to look out every minute, lest we should all be consumed. I was forced to obey, and give her from time to time the most solemn declarations that all was safe, and that I hoped we should reach the place without losing our lives either by fire or water.

Thus we passed on, over ways soft and hard, with more or less speed, but always with new vicissitudes of anxiety. If the ground was hard, we were jolted; if soft, we were sinking. If we went fast, we should be overturned; if slowly, we should never reach the place. At length we saw something which she called a cloud, and began to consider that at that time of the year it frequently thundered. This seemed to be the capital terrour, for after that the coach was suffered to move on; and no danger was thought too dreadful to be encountered, provided she could get into a house before the thunder.

Thus our whole conversation passed in dangers, and cares, and fears, and consolations, and stories of ladies dragged in the mire, forced to spend all the night on a heath, drowned in rivers, or burnt with lightning; and no sooner had a hairbreadth escape set us free from one calamity, but we were threatened with another.

At length we reached the house where we intended to regale ourselves, and I proposed to Anthea the choice of a great number of dishes, which the place, being well provided for entertainment, happened to afford. She made some objection to

every thing that was offered; one thing she hated at that time of the year, another she could not bear since she had seen it spoiled at lady Feedwell's table, another she was sure they could not dress at this house, and another she could not touch without French sauce. At last she fixed her mind upon salmon, but there was no salmon in the house. It was however procured with great expedition, and when it came to the table she found that her fright had taken away her stomach, which indeed she thought no great loss, for she could never believe that any thing at an inn could be cleanly got.

Dinner was now over, and the company proposed, for I was now past the condition of making overtures, that we should pursue our original design of visiting the gardens. Anthea declared that she could not imagine what pleasure we expected from the sight of a few green trees and a little gravel, and two or three pits of clear water; that for her part, she hated walking till the cool of the evening, and thought it very likely to rain; and again wished that she had staid at home. We then reconciled ourselves to our disappointment, and began to talk on common subjects, when Anthea told us, that since we came to see gardens, she would not hinder our satisfaction. We all rose, and walked through the enclosures for some time, with no other trouble than the necessity of watching lest a frog should hop across the way, which Anthea told us would certainly kill her, if she should happen to see him.

Frogs, as it fell out, there were none; but when we were within a furlong of the gardens, Anthea saw some sheep, and heard the wether clink his bell, which she was certain was not hung upon him for nothing, and therefore no assurances nor entreaties should prevail upon her to go a step further; she was sorry to disappoint the company, but her life was dearer to her than ceremony.

We came back to the inn, and Anthea now discovered that there was no time to be lost in returning, for the night would come upon us, and a thousand misfortunes might happen in the dark. The horses were immediately harnessed, and Anthea having wondered what could seduce her to stay so long, was eager to set out. But we had now a new scene of terrour, every man we saw was a robber, and we were ordered sometimes to drive hard, lest a traveller whom we saw behind should overtake us; and sometimes to stop, lest we should come up to him who was passing before us. She alarmed many an honest man, by begging him to spare her life, as he passed by the coach, and drew me into fifteen quarrels with persons who increased her fright, by kindly stopping to enquire whether they could assist us. At last we came home,

and she told her company next day what a pleasant ride she had been taking.

I suppose, sir, I need not inquire of you what deductions may be made from this narrative, nor what happiness can arise from the society of that woman who mistakes cowardice for elegance, and imagines all delicacy to consist in refusing to be pleased. I am, &c.

No. 35. Tuesday, July 17, 1750.

———*Non prænuba* Juno,
Non Hymenæus *adest, non illi* Gratia *lecto.* Ovid.

Without connubial *June's* aid they wed;
Nor *Hymen* nor the *Graces* bless the bed. Elphinston.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—As you have hitherto delayed the performance of the promise, by which you gave us reason to hope for another paper upon matrimony, I imagine you desirous of collecting more materials than your own experience, or observation, can supply; and I shall therefore lay candidly before you an account of my own entrance into the conjugal state.

I was about eight-and-twenty years old, when having tried the diversions of the town till I began to be weary, and being awakened into attention to more serious business, by the failure of an attorney to whom I had implicitly trusted the conduct of my fortune, I resolved to take my estate into my own care, and methodise my whole life according to the strictest rules of economical prudence.

In pursuance of this scheme, I took leave of my acquaintance, who dismissed me with numberless jests upon my new system; having first endeavoured to divert me from a design so little worthy of a man of wit, by ridiculous accounts of the ignorance and rusticity into which many had sunk in their retirement, after having distinguished themselves in taverns and playhouses, and given hopes of rising to uncommon eminence among the gay part of mankind.

When I came first into the country, which by a neglect not uncommon among young heirs, I had never seen since the death of my father, I found every thing in such confusion, that being utterly without practice in business, I had great difficulties to encounter in disentangling the perplexities of

my circumstances; they however gave way to diligent application; and I perceived that the advantage of keeping my own accounts would very much over-balance the time which they could require.

I had now visited my tenants, surveyed my land, and repaired the old house, which, for some years, had been running to decay. These proofs of pecuniary wisdom began to recommend me as a sober, judicious, thriving gentleman, to all my graver neighbours of the country, who never failed to celebrate my management in opposition to Thriftless and Latterwit, two smart fellows, who had estates in the same part of the kingdom, which they visited now and then in a frolic, to take up their rents beforehand, debauch a milk-maid, make a feast for the village, and tell stories of their intrigues, and then rode post back to town to spend their money.

It was doubtful, however, for some time, whether I should be able to hold my resolution; but a short perseverance removed all suspicions. I rose every day in reputation, by the decency of my conversation, and the regularity of my conduct, and was mentioned with great regard at the assizes, as a man very fit to be put in commission for the peace.

During the confusion of my affairs, and the daily necessity of visiting farms, adjusting contracts, letting leases, and superintending repairs, I found very little vacuity in my life, and therefore had not many thoughts of marriage; but, in a little while the tumult of business subsided, and the exact method which I had established enabled me to despatch my accounts with great facility. I had, therefore, now upon my hands, the task of finding means to spend my time, without falling back into the poor amusements which I had hitherto indulged, or changing them for the sports of the field, which I saw pursued with so much eagerness by the gentlemen of the country, that they were indeed the only pleasures in which I could promise myself any partaker.

The inconvenience of this situation naturally disposed me to wish for a companion, and the known value of my estate, with my reputation for frugality and prudence, easily gained me admission into every family; for I soon found that no inquiry was made after any other virtue, nor any testimonial necessary, but of my freedom from encumbrances, and my care of what they termed the *main chance*. I saw, not without indignation, the eagerness with which the daughters, wherever I came, were set out to show; nor could I consider them in a state much different from prostitution, when I found them ordered to play their airs before me, and to exhibit, by some seeming chance, specimens of their music, their work,

or their housewifery. No sooner was I placed at table, than the young lady was called upon to pay me some civility or other; nor could I find means of escaping, from either father or mother, some account of their daughter's excellences, with a declaration that they were now leaving the world, and had no business on this side the grave, but to see their children happily disposed of; that she whom I had been pleased to compliment at table was indeed the chief pleasure of their age, so good, so dutiful, so great a relief to her mamma in the care of the house, and so much her papa's favourite for her cheerfulness and wit, that it would be with the last reluctance that they should part; but to a worthy gentleman in the neighbourhood, whom they might often visit, they would not so far consult their own gratification as to refuse her; and their tenderness should be shown in her fortune, whenever a suitable settlement was proposed.

As I knew these overtures not to proceed from any preference of me before another equally rich, I could not but look with pity on young persons condemned to be set to auction, and made cheap by injudicious commendations; for how could they know themselves offered and rejected a hundred times, without some loss of that soft elevation, and maiden dignity, so necessary to the completion of female excellence?

I shall not trouble you with a history of the stratagems practised upon my judgment, or the allurements tried upon my heart, which, if you have, in any part of your life, been acquainted with rural politics, you will easily conceive. Their arts have no great variety, they think nothing worth their care but money, and supposing its influence the same upon all the world, seldom endeavour to deceive by any other means than false computations.

I will not deny that, by hearing myself loudly commended for my discretion, I began to set some value upon my character, and was unwilling to lose my credit by marrying for love. I therefore resolved to know the fortune of the lady whom I should address, before I inquired after her wit, delicacy, or beauty.

This determination led me to Mitissa, the daughter of Chrysophilus, whose person was at least without deformity, and whose manners were free from reproach, as she had been bred up at a distance from all common temptations. To Mitissa therefore I obtained leave from her parents to pay my court, and was referred by her again to her father, whose direction she was resolved to follow. The question then was, only, what should be settled? The old gentleman made an enormous demand, with which I refused to comply. Mi-

tissa was ordered to exert her power; she told me, that if I could refuse her papa, I had no love for her; that she was an unhappy creature, and that I was a perfidious man; then she burst into tears, and fell into fits. All this, as I was no passionate lover, had little effect. She next refused to see me, and because I thought myself obliged to write in terms of distress, they had once hopes of starving me into measures; but finding me inflexible, the father complied with my proposal, and told me he liked me the more for being so good at a bargain.

I was now married to Mitissa, and was to experience the happiness of a match made without passion. Mitissa soon discovered that she was equally prudent with myself, and had taken a husband only to be at her own command, and to have a chariot at her own call. She brought with her an old maid recommended by her mother, who taught her all the arts of domestic management, and was, on every occasion, her chief agent and directress. They soon invented one reason or other to quarrel with all my servants, and either prevailed on me to turn them away, or treated them so ill that they left me of themselves, and always supplied their places with some brought from my wife's relations. Thus they established a family, over which I had no authority, and which was in a perpetual conspiracy against me; for Mitissa considered herself as having a separate interest, and thought nothing her own, but what she laid up without my knowledge. For this reason she brought me false accounts of the expenses of the house, joined with my tenants in complaints of hard times, and by means of a steward of her own, took rewards for soliciting abatements of the rent. Her great hope is to outlive me, that she may enjoy what she has thus accumulated, and therefore she is always contriving some improvements of her jointure land, and once tried to procure an injunction to hinder me from felling timber upon it for repairs. Her father and mother assist her in her projects, and are frequently hinting that she is ill used, and reproaching me with the presents that other ladies receive from their husbands.

Such, sir, was my situation for seven years, till at last my patience was exhausted, and having one day invited her father to my house, I laid the state of my affairs before him, detected my wife in several of her frauds, turned out her steward, charged a constable with her maid, took my business in my own hands, reduced her to a settled allowance, and now write this account to warn others against marrying those whom they have no reason to esteem.

I am, &c.

No. 36. Saturday, July 21, 1750.

Ἀμ' ἕποντο νομῆες
Τερπόμενοι σύριγξι δόλον δ' οὔτι προνόησαν. Homer.

———Piping on their reeds the shepherds go,
Nor fear an ambush, nor suspect a foe. Pope.

There is scarcely any species of poetry that has allured more readers, or excited more writers, than the pastoral. It is generally pleasing, because it entertains the mind with representations of scenes familiar to almost every imagination, and of which all can equally judge whether they are well described. It exhibits a life, to which we have been always accustomed to associate peace, and leisure, and innocence: and therefore we readily set open the heart for the admission of its images, which contribute to drive away cares and perturbations, and suffer ourselves, without resistance, to be transported to elysian regions, where we are to meet with nothing but joy, and plenty, and contentment; where every gale whispers pleasure, and every shade promises repose.

It has been maintained by some, who love to talk of what they do not know, that pastoral is the most ancient poetry; and, indeed, since it is probable that poetry is nearly of the same antiquity with rational nature, and since the life of the first men was certainly rural, we may reasonably conjecture, that, as their ideas would necessarily be borrowed from those objects with which they are acquainted, their composures, being filled chiefly with such thoughts on the visible creation as must occur to the first observers, were pastoral hymns, like those which Milton introduces the original pair singing, in the day of innocence, to the praise of their Maker.

For the same reason that pastoral poetry was the first employment of the human imagination, it is generally the first literary amusement of our minds. We have seen fields, and meadows, and groves, from the time that our eyes opened upon life; and are pleased with birds, and brooks, and breezes, much earlier than we engage among the actions and passions of mankind. We are therefore delighted with rural pictures, because we know the original at an age when our curiosity can be very little awakened by descriptions of courts which we never beheld, or representations of passions which we never felt.

The satisfaction received from this kind of writing not only begins early, but lasts long; we do not, as we advance into the intellectual world, throw it away among other childish amusements and pastimes, but willingly return to it in any hour of indolence and relaxation. The images of true pastoral have always the power of exciting delight, because the works of nature, from which they are drawn, have always the same order and beauty, and continue to force themselves upon our thoughts, being at once obvious to the most careless regard, and more than adequate to the strongest reason, and severest contemplation. Our inclination to stillness and tranquillity is seldom much lessened by long knowledge of the busy and tumultuary part of the world. In childhood we turn our thoughts to the country, as to the region of pleasure; we recur to it in old age as a port of rest, and perhaps with that secondary and adventitious gladness, which every man feels on reviewing those places, or recollecting those occurrences, that contributed to his youthful enjoyments, and bring him back to the prime of life, when the world was gay with the bloom of novelty, when mirth wantoned at his side, and hope sparkled before him.

The sense of this universal pleasure has invited *numbers without number* to try their skill in pastoral performances, in which they have generally succeeded after the manner of other imitators, transmitting the same images in the same combination from one to another, till he that reads the title of a poem, may guess at the whole series of the composition; nor will a man, after the perusal of thousands of these performances, find his knowledge enlarged with a single view of nature not produced before, or his imagination amused with any new application of those views to moral purposes.

The range of pastoral is indeed narrow; for though nature itself, philosophically considered, be inexhaustible, yet its general effects on the eye and on the ear are uniform, and incapable of much variety of description. Poetry cannot dwell upon the minuter distinctions, by which one species differs from another, without departing from that simplicity of grandeur which fills the imagination; nor dissect the latent qualities of things, without losing its general power of gratifying every mind by recalling its conceptions. However, as each age makes some discoveries, and those discoveries are by degrees generally known, as new plants or modes of culture are introduced, and by little and little become common, pastoral might receive, from time to time, small augmentations, and exhibit once in a century a scene somewhat varied.

But pastoral subjects have been often, like others, taken into the hands of those that were not qualified to adorn them, men to whom the face of nature was so little known, that they have drawn it *only* after their own imagination, and changed or distorted her features, that their portraits might appear something more than servile copies from their predecessors.

Not only the images of rural life, but the occasions on which they can be properly produced, are few and general. The state of a man confined to the employment and pleasures of the country, is so little diversified, and exposed to so few of those accidents which produce perplexities, terrours, and surprises, in more complicated transactions, that he can be shown but seldom in such circumstances as attract curiosity. His ambition is without policy, and his love without intrigue. He has no complaints to make of his rival, but that he is richer than himself; nor any disasters to lament, but a cruel mistress, or a bad harvest.

The conviction of the necessity of some new source of pleasure induced Sannazarius to remove the scene from the fields to the sea, to substitute fishermen for shepherds, and derive his sentiments from the piscatory life; for which he has been censured by succeeding critics, because the sea is an object of terrour, and by no means proper to amuse the mind, and lay the passions asleep. Against this objection he might be defended by the established maxim, that the poet has a right to select his images, and is no more obliged to show the sea in a storm, than the land under an inundation; but may display all the pleasures, and conceal the dangers of the water, as he may lay his shepherd under a shady beech, without giving him an ague, or letting a wild beast loose upon him.

There are, however, two defects in the piscatory eclogue, which perhaps cannot be supplied. The sea, though in hot countries it is considered by those who live, like Sannazarius, upon the coast, as a place of pleasure and diversion, has notwithstanding much less variety than the land, and therefore will be sooner exhausted by a descriptive writer. When he has once shown the sun rising or setting upon it, curled its waters with the vernal breeze, rolled the waves in gentle succession to the shore, and enumerated the fish sporting in the shallows, he has nothing remaining but what is common to all other poetry, the complaint of a nymph for a drowned lover, or the indignation of a fisher that his oysters are refused, and Mycon's accepted.

Another obstacle to the general reception of this kind of poetry, is the ignorance of maritime pleasures, in which the

greater part of mankind must always live. To all the inland inhabitants of every region, the sea is only known as an immense diffusion of waters, over which men pass from one country to another, and in which life is frequently lost. They have, therefore, no opportunity of tracing in their own thoughts, the descriptions of winding shores and calm bays, nor can look on the poem in which they are mentioned, with other sensations than on a sea chart, or the metrical geography of Dionysius.

This defect Sannazarius was hindered from perceiving, by writing in a learned language to readers generally acquainted with the works of nature; but if he had made his attempt in any vulgar tongue, he would soon have discovered how vainly he had endeavoured to make that loved, which was not understood.

I am afraid it will not be found easy to improve the pastorals of antiquity, by any great additions or diversifications. Our descriptions may indeed differ from those of Virgil, as an English from an Italian summer, and in some respects, as modern from ancient life; but as nature is in both countries nearly the same, and as poetry has to do rather with the passions of men, which are uniform, than their customs, which are changeable, the varieties, which time or place can furnish, will be inconsiderable; and I shall endeavour to show, in the next paper, how little the latter ages have contributed to the improvement of the rustic muse.

No. 37. Tuesday, July 24, 1750.

Canto quæ solitus, si quando armenta vocabat,
Amphion Dircæus. Virg.

Such strains I sing as once *Amphion* play'd,
When list'ning flocks the powerful call obey'd.
Elphinston.

In writing or judging of pastoral poetry, neither the authors nor critics of latter times seem to have paid sufficient regard to the originals left us by antiquity, but have entangled themselves with unnecessary difficulties, by advancing principles, which, having no foundation in the nature of things, are wholly to be rejected from a species of composition, in which, above all others, mere nature is to be regarded.

It is therefore necessary to inquire after some more dis-

tinct and exact idea of this kind of writing. This may, I think, be easily found in the pastorals of Virgil, from whose opinion it will not appear very safe to depart, if we consider that every advantage of nature and of fortune concurred to complete his productions; that he was born with great accuracy and severity of judgment, enlightened with all the learning of one of the brighest ages, and embellished with the elegance of the Roman court; that he employed his powers rather in improving than inventing, and therefore must have endeavoured to recompense the want of novelty by exactness; that taking Theocritus for his original, he found pastoral far advanced towards perfection, and that having so great a rival, he must have proceeded with uncommon caution.

If we search the writings of Virgil, for the true definition of a pastoral, it will be found *a poem in which any action or passion is represented by its effects upon a country life.* Whatsoever, therefore may, according to the common course of things, happen in the country, may afford a subject for a pastoral poet.

In this definition, it will immediately occur to those who are versed in the writings of the modern critics, that there is no mention of the golden age. I cannot indeed easily discover why it is thought necessary to refer descriptions of a rural state to remote times, nor can I perceive that any writer has consistently preserved the Arcadian manners and sentiments. The only reason that I have read, on which this rule has been founded, is, that, according to the customs of modern life, it is improbable that shepherds should be capable of harmonious numbers, or delicate sentiments; and therefore the reader must exalt his ideas of the pastoral character, by carrying his thoughts to the age in which the care of herds and flocks was the employment of the wisest and greatest men.

These reasoners seem to have been led into their hypothesis, by considering pastoral, not in general, as a representation of rural nature, and consequently as exhibiting the ideas and sentiments of those, whoever they are, to whom the country affords pleasure or employment, but simply as a dialogue, or narrative of men actually tending sheep, and busied in the lowest and most laborious offices; from whence they very readily concluded, since characters must necessarily be preserved, that either the sentiments must sink to the level of the speakers, or the speakers must be raised to the height of the sentiments.

In consequence of these original errours, a thousand precepts have been given, which have only contributed to perplex and confound. Some have thought it necessary that the imaginary

manners of the golden age should be universally preserved, and have therefore believed, that nothing more could be admitted in pastoral, than lilies and roses, and rocks and streams, among which are heard the gentle whispers of chaste fondness, or the soft complaints of amorous impatience. In pastoral, as in other writings, chastity of sentiment ought doubtless to be observed, and purity of manners to be represented; not because the poet is confined to the images of the golden age, but because, having the subject in his own choice, he ought always to consult the interest of virtue.

These advocates for the golden age lay down other principles, not very consistent with their general plan; for they tell us, that, to support the character of the shepherd, it is proper that all refinement should be avoided, and that some slight instances of ignorance should be interspersed. Thus the shepherd in Virgil, is supposed to have forgot the name of Anaximander, and in Pope the term zodiac is too hard for a rustic apprehension. But if we place our shepherds in their primitive condition, we may give them learning among their other qualifications; and if we suffer them to allude at all to things of later existence, which, perhaps, cannot with any great propriety be allowed, there can be no danger of making them speak with too much accuracy, since they conversed with divinities, and transmitted to succeeding ages the arts of life.

Other writers, having the mean and despicable condition of a shepherd always before them, conceive it necessary to degrade the language of pastoral by obsolete terms and rustic words, which they very learnedly call Doric, without reflecting, that they thus become authors of a mangled dialect, which no human being ever could have spoken, that they may as well refine the speech as the sentiments of their personage, and that none of the inconsistencies which they endeavour to avoid, is greater than that of joining elegance of thought with coarseness of diction. Spenser begins one of his pastorals with studied barbarity;

> *Diggon Davie*, I bid her good-day:
> Or, *Diggon* her is, or I missay.
> *Dig.* Her was her while it was day-light,
> But now her is a most wretched wight.

What will the reader imagine to be the subject on which speakers like these exercise their eloquence? Will he not be somewhat disappointed, when he finds them met together to condemn the corruptions of the church of Rome? Surely, at

the same time that a shepherd learns theology, he may gain some acquaintance with his native language.

Pastoral admits of all ranks of persons, because persons of all ranks inhabit the country. It excludes not, therefore, on account of the characters necessary to be introduced, any elevation or delicacy of sentiment; those ideas only are improper, which, not owing their original to rural objects, are not pastoral. Such is the exclamation in Virgil,

Nunc scio quid sit Amor, duris in cautibus illum
Ismarus, aut Rhodope, aut extremi Garamantes,
Nec generis nostri puerum, nec sanguinis, edunt.

I know thee, Love, in deserts thou wert bred,
And at the dugs of savage tigers fed;
Alien of birth, usurper of the plains. DRYDEN.

Which Pope endeavouring to copy, was carried to still greater impropriety:

I know thee, Love, wild as the raging main,
More fierce than tigers on the Libyan plain;
Thou wert from Ætna's burning entrails torn;
Begot in tempests, and in thunders born!

Sentiments like these, as they have no ground in nature, are indeed of little value in any poem; but in pastoral they are particularly liable to censure, because it wants that exaltation above common life, which in tragic or heroic writings often reconciles us to bold flights and daring figures.

Pastoral being the *representation of an action or passion, by its effects upon a country life*, has nothing peculiar but its confinement to rural imagery, without which it ceases to be pastoral. This is its true characteristic, and this it cannot lose by any dignity of sentiment, or beauty of diction. The Pollio of Virgil, with all its elevation, is a composition truly bucolic, though rejected by the critics; for all the images are either taken from the country, or from the religion of the age common to all parts of the empire.

The Silenus is indeed of a more disputable kind, because though the scene lies in the country, the song being religious and historical, had been no less adapted to any other audience or place. Neither can it well be defended as a fiction: for the introduction of a god seems to imply the golden age, and yet he alludes to many subsequent transactions, and mentions Gallus, the poet's contemporary.

It seems necessary to the perfection of this poem, that the occasion which is supposed to produce it, be at least not inconsistent with a country life, or less likely to interest those

have retired into places of solitude and quiet, than the e busy part of mankind. It is therefore improper to give title of a pastoral to verses, in which the speakers, after slight mention of their flocks, fall to complaints of errours ie church, and corruptions in the government, or to lamentations of the death of some illustrious person, whom, n once the poet has called a shepherd, he has no longer labour upon his hands, but can make the clouds weep, lilies wither, and the sheep hang their heads, without or learning, genius or study.

is part of Claudian's character of his rustic, that he putes his time not by the succession of consuls, but of ests. Those who pass their days in retreats distant the theatres of business, are always least likely to hurry imagination with public affairs.

he facility of treating actions or events in the pastoral , has incited many writers, from whom more judgment it have been expected, to put the sorrow or the joy which occasion required into the mouth of Daphne or of Thyrsis; as one absurdity must naturally be expected to make way nother, they have written with an utter disregard both fe and nature, and filled their productions with mytholo- l allusions, with incredible fictions, and with sentiments h neither passion nor reason could have dictated, since hange which religion has made in the whole system of world.

No. 38. Saturday, July 28, 1750.

Auream quisquis mediocritatem
Diligit, tutus caret obsoleti
Sordibus tecti, caret invidendâ
Sobrius aula. Hor.

The man within the golden mean,
Who can his boldest wish contain,
Securely views the ruin'd cell,
Where sordid want and sorrow dwell;
And in himself serenely great,
Declines an envied room of state. Francis.

MONG many parallels which men of imagination have n between the natural and moral state of the world, it been observed that happiness, as well as virtue, con- in mediocrity; that to avoid every extreme is necessary

even to him who has no other care than to pass through the present state with ease and safety; and that the middle path is the road of security, on either side of which are not only the pitfalls of vice, but the precipices of ruin.

Thus the maxim of Cleobulus the Lindian, μέτρον ἄριστον, *Mediocrity is best*, has been long considered as an universal principle, extended through the whole compass of life and nature. The experience of every age seems to have given it new confirmation, and to show that nothing, however specious or alluring, is pursued with propriety, or enjoyed with safety beyond certain limits.

Even the gifts of nature, which may truly be considered as the most solid and durable of all terrestrial advantages, are found, when they exceed the middle point, to draw the possessor into many calamities, easily avoided by others that have been less bountifully enriched or adorned. We see every day women perish with infamy, by having been too willing to set their beauty to show; and others, though not with equal guilt or misery, yet with very sharp remorse, languishing in decay, neglect, and obscurity, for having rated their youthful charms at too high a price. And, indeed, if the opinion of Bacon be thought to deserve much regard, very few sighs would be vented for eminent and superlative elegance of form; "for beautiful women," says he, "are seldom of any great accomplishments, because they, for the most part, study behaviour rather than virtue."

Health and vigour, and a happy constitution of the corporeal frame, are of absolute necessity to the enjoyment of the comforts, and to the performance of the duties of life, and requisite in yet a greater measure to the accomplishment of any thing illustrious or distinguished; yet even these, if we can judge by their apparent consequences, are sometimes not very beneficial to those on whom they are most liberally bestowed. They that frequent the chambers of the sick will generally find the sharpest pains, and most stubborn maladies, among them whom confidence of the force of nature formerly betrayed to negligence and irregularity; and that superfluity of strength, which was at once their boast and their snare, has often, in the latter part of life, no other effect than that it continues them long in impotence and anguish.

These gifts of nature are, however, always blessings in themselves, and to be acknowledged with gratitude to him that gives them; since they are, in their regular and legitimate effects, productive of happiness, and prove pernicious only by voluntary corruption or idle negligence. And as

there is little danger of pursuing them with too much ardour or anxiety, because no skill or diligence can hope to procure them, the uncertainty of their influence upon our lives is mentioned, not to depreciate their real value, but to repress the discontent and envy to which the want of them often gives occasion in those who do not enough suspect their own frailty, nor consider how much less is the calamity of not possessing great powers, than of not using them aright.

Of all those things that make us superior to others, there is none so much within the reach of our endeavours as riches, nor any thing more eagerly or constantly desired. Poverty is an evil always in our view, an evil complicated with so many circumstances of uneasiness and vexation, that every man is studious to avoid it. Some degree of riches is therefore required, that we may be exempt from the gripe of necessity; when this purpose is once attained, we naturally wish for more, that the evil which is regarded with so much horrour, may be yet at a greater distance from us; as he that has once felt or dreaded the paw of a savage, will not be at rest till they are parted by some barrier, which may take away all possibility of a second attack.

To this point, if fear be not reasonably indulged, Cleobulus would, perhaps, not refuse to extend his mediocrity. But it almost always happens, that the man who grows rich, changes his notions of poverty, states his wants by some new measure, and from flying the enemy that pursued him, bends his endeavours to overtake those whom he sees before him. The power of gratifying his appetites increases their demands; a thousand wishes crowd in upon him, importunate to be satisfied, and vanity and ambition open prospects to desire, which still grow wider as they are more contemplated.

Thus in time want is enlarged without bounds; an eagerness for increase of possessions deluges the soul, and we sink into the gulfs of insatiability, only because we do not sufficiently consider, that all real need is very soon supplied, and all real danger of its invasion easily precluded; that the claims of vanity, being without limits, must be denied at last; and that the pain of repressing them is less pungent before they have been long accustomed to compliance.

Whosoever shall look heedfully upon those who are eminent for their riches, will not think their condition such as that he should hazard his quiet, and much less his virtue, to obtain it. For all that great wealth generally gives above a moderate fortune, is more room for the freaks of caprice, and more privilege for ignorance and vice, a quicker succession of flatteries, and a larger circle of voluptuousness.

There is one reason seldom remarked which makes riches less desirable. Too much wealth is very frequently the occasion of poverty. He whom the wantonness of abundance has once softened, easily sinks into neglect of his affairs; and he that thinks he can afford to be negligent, is not far from being poor. He will soon be involved in perplexities, which his inexperience will render unsurmountable; he will fly for help to those whose interest it is that he should be more distressed; and will be at last torn to pieces by vultures that always hover over fortunes in decay.

When the plains of India were burnt up by a long continuance of drought, Hamet and Raschid, two neighbouring shepherds, faint with thirst, stood at the common boundary of their grounds, with their flocks and herds panting round them, and in extremity of distress prayed for water. On a sudden the air was becalmed, the birds ceased to chirp, and the flocks to bleat. They turned their eyes every way, and saw a being of mighty stature advancing through the valley, whom they knew upon his nearer approach to be the Genius of Distribution. In one hand he held the sheaves of plenty, and in the other the sabre of destruction. The shepherds stood trembling, and would have retired before him; but he called to them with a voice gentle as the breeze that plays in the evening among the spices of Sabæ; "Fly not from your benefactor, children of the dust! I am come to offer you gifts, which only your own folly can make vain. You here pray for water, and water I will bestow; let me know with how much you will be satisfied: speak not rashly; consider, that of whatever can be enjoyed by the body, excess is no less dangerous than scarcity. When you remember the pain of thirst, do not forget the danger of suffocation. Now, Hamet, tell me your requeet."

"O Being, kind and beneficent," says Hamet, "let thine eye pardon my confusion. I entreat a little brook, which in summer shall never be dry, and in winter never overflow." "It is granted," replies the Genius; and immediately he opened the ground with his sabre, and a fountain bubbling up under their feet, scattered its rills over the meadows; the flowers renewed their fragrance, the trees spread a greener foilage, and the flocks and herds quenched their thirst.

Then turning to Raschid, the Genius invited him likewise to offer his petition. "I request," says Raschid, "that thou wilt turn the Ganges through my grounds, with all its waters, and all their inhabitants." Hamet was struck with the greatness of his neighbour's sentiments, and secretly repined in his heart, that he had not made the same petition before him;

when the genius spoke, "Rash man, be not insatiable! remember, to thee that is nothing which thou canst not use, and how are thy wants greater than the wants of Hamet?" Raschid repeated his desire, and pleased himself with the mean appearance that Hamet would make in the presence of the proprietor of the Ganges. The genius then retired towards the river and the two shepherds stood waiting the event. As Raschid was looking with contempt upon his neighbour, on a sudden was heard the roar of torrents, and they found by the mighty stream that the mounds of the Ganges were broken. The flood rolled forward into the lands of Raschid, his plantations were torn up, his flocks overwhelmed, he was swept away before it, and a crocodile devoured him.

No. 39. Tuesday, July 31, 1750.

Infelix——nulli bene nupta marito. Ausonius.

Unblest, still doom'd to wed with misery.

The condition of the female sex has been frequently the subject of compassion to medical writers, because their constitution of body is such, that every state of life brings its peculiar diseases: they are placed, according to the proverb, between Scylla and Charybdis, with no other choice than of dangers equally formidable; and whether they embrace marriage, or determine upon a single life, are exposed, in consequence of their choice, to sickness, misery, and death.

It were to be wished that so great a degree of natural infelicity might not be increased by adventitious and artificial miseries; and that beings, whose beauty we cannot behold without admiration, and whose delicacy we cannot contemplate without tenderness, might be suffered to enjoy every alleviation of their sorrows. But, however it has happened, the custom of the world seems to have been formed in a kind of conspiracy against them, though it does not appear but they had themselves an equal share in its establishment; and prescriptions which, by whomsoever they were begun, are now of long continuauce, and by consequence of great authority, seem to have almost excluded them from content, in whatsoever condition they shall pass their lives.

If they refuse the society of men, and continue in that state which is reasonably supposed to place happiness most in their own power, they seldom give those that frequent their com-

versation any exalted notions of the blessing of liberty; for whether it be that they are angry to see with what inconsiderate eagerness other heedless females rush into slavery, or with what absurd vanity the married ladies boast the change of their condition, and condemn the heroines who endeavour to assert the natural dignity of their sex; whether they are conscious that, like barren countries they are free, only because they were never thought to deserve the trouble of a conquest, or imagine that their sincerity is not always suspected, when they declare their contempt of men; it is certain, that they generally appear to have some great and incessant cause of uneasiness, and that many of them have at length been persuaded, by powerful rhetoricians, to try the life which they had so long contemned, and put on the bridal ornaments at a time when they least become them.

What are the real causes of the impatience which the ladies discover in a virgin state, I shall perhaps take some other occasion to examine. That it is not to be envied for its happiness, appears from the solicitude with which it is avoided; from the opinion universally prevalent among the sex, that no woman continues long in it but because she is not invited to forsake it; from the disposition always shown to treat old maids as the refuse of the world; and from the willingness with which it is often quitted at last, by those whose experience has enabled them to judge at leisure and decide with authority.

Yet such is life, that whatever is proposed, it is much easier to find reasons for rejecting than embracing. Marriage, though a certain security from the reproach and solitude of antiquated virginity, has yet, as it is usually conducted, many disadvantages, that take away much from the pleasure which society promises, and might afford, if pleasures and pains were honestly shared, and mutual confidence inviolably preserved.

The miseries, indeed, which many ladies suffer under conjugal vexations, are to be considered with great pity, because their husbands are often not taken by them as objects of affection, but forced upon them by authority and violence, or by persuasion and importunity, equally resistless when urged by those whom they have been always accustomed to reverence and obey; and it very seldom appears that those who are thus despotic in the disposal of their children, pay any regard to their domestic and personal felicity, or think it so much to be inquired whether they will be happy, as whether they will be rich.

It may be urged, in extenuation of this crime, which ge-

rents, not in any other respect to be numbered with robbers and assassins, frequently commit, that, in their estimation, riches and happiness are equivalent terms. They have passed their lives with no other wish than of adding acre to acre, and filling one bag after another, and imagine the advantage of a daughter sufficiently considered, when they have secured her a large jointure, and given her reasonable expectations of living in the midst of those pleasures with which she had seen her father and mother solacing their age.

There is an economical oracle received among the prudential part of the world, which advises fathers "to marry their daughters, lest they should marry themselves;" by which I suppose it is implied, that women left to their own conduct generally unite themselves with such partners as can contribute very little to their felicity. Who was the author of this maxim, or with what intention it was originally uttered, I have not yet discovered; but imagine, that however solemnly it may be transmitted, or however implicitly received, it can confer no authority which nature has denied; it cannot license Titius to be unjust, lest Caia should be imprudent; nor give right to imprison for life, lest liberty should be ill employed.

That the ladies have sometimes incurred imputations which might naturally produce edicts not much in their favour, must be confessed by their warmest advocates; and I have indeed seldom observed that when the tenderness or virtue of their parents has preserved them from forced marriage, and left them at large to choose their own path in the labyrinth of life, they have made any great advantage of their liberty: they commonly take the opportunity of independence to trifle away youth, and lose their bloom in a hurry of diversions, recurring in a succession too quick to leave room for any settled reflection; they see the world without gaining experience, and at last regulate their choice by motives trifling as those of a girl, or mercenary as those of a miser.

Melanthia came to town upon the death of her father, with a very large fortune, and with the reputation of a much larger; she was therefore followed and caressed by many men of rank, and by some of understanding; but having an insatiable desire of pleasure, she was not at leisure, from the park, the gardens, the theatres, visits, assemblies, and masquerades, to attend seriously to any proposal, but was still impatient for a new flatterer, and neglected marriage as always in her power; till in time her admirers fell away, wearied with expense, disgusted at her folly, or offended by her inconstancy; she heard of concerts to which she was not invited, and was more than once forced to sit still at an as-

sembly for want of a partner. In this distress, chance threw in her way Philotryphus, a man vain, glittering, and thoughtless as herself, who had spent a small fortune in equipage and dress, and was shining in the last suit for which his tailor would give him credit. He had been long endeavouring to retrieve his extravagance by marriage, and therefore soon paid his court to Melanthia, who after some weeks of insensibility saw him at a ball, and was wholly overcome by his performance in a minuet. They married: but a man cannot always dance, and Philotryphus had no other method of pleasing: however, as neither was in any great degree vicious, they live together with no other unhappiness, than vacuity of mind, and that tastelessness of life, which proceeds from a satiety of juvenile pleasures, and an utter inability to fill their place by nobler employments. As they have known the fashionable world at the same time, they agree in their notions of all those subjects on which they ever speak; and being able to add nothing to the ideas of each other, are not much inclined to conversation, but very often join in one wish, "That they could sleep more, and think less."

Argyris, after having refused a thousand offers, at last consented to marry Cotylus, the younger brother of a duke, a man without elegance of mien, beauty of person, or force of understanding; who, while he courted her, could not always forbear allusions to her birth, and hints how cheaply she would purchase an alliance to so illustrious a family. His conduct from the hour of his marriage has been insufferably tyrannical, nor has he any other regard to her than what arises from his desire that her appearance may not disgrace him. Upon this principle, however, he always orders that she should be gaily dressed, and splendidly attended; and she has, among all her mortifications, the happiness to take place of her eldest sister.

No. 40. Saturday, August, 4, 1750.

——Nec dicet, cur ego amicum
Offendam in nugis? Hæ nugæ seria ducent
In mala derisum semel. Hor.

Nor say, for trifles why should I displease
The man I love? For trifles such as these
To serious mischiefs lead the man I love,
If once the flatterer's ridicule he prove. Francis.

It has been remarked, that authors are *genus irritabile, a generation very easily put out of temper*, and that they seldom fail of giving proofs of their irascibility upon the slightest attack of criticism, or the most gentle or modest offer of advice and information.

Writers being best acquainted with one another, have represented this character as prevailing among men of literature, which a more extensive view of the world would have shown them to be diffused through all human nature, to mingle itself with every species of ambition and desire of praise, and to discover its effects with greater or less restraint, and under disguises more or less artful, in all places and all conditions.

The quarrels of writers, indeed, are more observed, because they necessarily appeal to the decision of the public. Their animities are incited by applauses from their parties, and prolonged by treacherous encouragement for general diversion; and when the contest happens to rise high between men of genius and learning, its memory is continued for the same reason as its vehemence was at first promoted, because it gratifies the malevolence or curiosity of readers, and relieves the vacancies of life with amusement and laughter. The personal disputes, therefore, of rivals in wit are sometimes transmitted to posterity, when the grudges and heart-burnings of men less conspicuous, though carried on with equal bitterness, and productive of greater evils, are exposed to the knowledge of those only whom they nearly affect, and suffered to pass off and be forgotten among common and casual transactions.

The resentment which the discovery of a fault or folly produces, must bear a certain proportion to our pride, and will regularly be more acrimonious as pride is more immediately the principle of action. In whatever therefore we wish or imagine ourselves to excel, we shall always be displeased to have our claims to reputation disputed; and more displeased

if the accomplishment be such as can expect reputation only for its reward. For this reason it is common to find men break out into a rage at any insinuations to the disadvantage of their wit, who have born with great patience reflections on their morals; and of women it has been always known, that no censure wounds so deeply, or rankles so long, as that which charges them with want of beauty.

As men frequently fill their imaginations with trifling pursuits, and please themselves most with things of small importance, I have often known very severe and lasting malevolence excited by unlucky censures, which would have fallen without any effect, had they not happened to wound a part remarkably tender. Gustulus, who valued himself upon the nicety of his palate, disinherited his eldest son for telling him that the wine which he was then commending, was the same which he had sent away the day before not fit to be drunk. Proculus withdrew his kindness from a nephew, whom he had always considered the most promising genius of the age, for happening to praise in his presence the graceful horsemanship of Marius. And Fortunio, when he was privy counseller, procured a clerk to be dismissed from one of the public offices, in which he was eminent for his skill and assiduity, because he had been heard to say that there was another man in the kingdom on whose skill at billiards he would lay his money against Fortunio's.

Felicia and Floretta had been bred up in one house, and shared all the pleasures and endearments of infancy together. They entered upon life at the same time, and continued their confidence and friendship; consulted each other in every change of their dress, and every admission of a new lover; thought every diversion more entertaining whenever it happened that both were present, and when separated justified the conduct, and celebrated the excellencies, of one another. Such was their intimacy, and such their fidelity; till a birth-night approached, when Floretta took one morning an opportunity, as they were consulting upon new clothes, to advise her friend not to dance at the ball, and informed her that her performance the year before had not answered the expectation which her other accomplishments had raised. Felicia commended her sincerity, and thanked her for the caution; but told her that she danced to please herself, and was very little concerned what the men might take the liberty of saying, but that if her appearance gave her dear Floretta any uneasiness, she would stay away. Floretta had now nothing left but to make new protestations of sincerity and affection, with which Felicia was so well satisfied, that they parted

with more than usual fondness. They still continued to visit, with this only difference, that Felicia was more punctual than before, and often declared how high a value she put upon sincerity, how much she thought that goodness to be esteemed which would venture to admonish a friend of an errour, and with what gratitude advice was to be received, even when it might happen to proceed from mistake.

In a few months, Felicia, with great seriousness, told Floretta, that though her beauty was such as gave charms to whatever she did, and her qualifications so extensive, that she could not fail of excellence in any attempt, yet she thought herself obliged by the duties of friendship to inform her, that if ever she betrayed want of judgment, it was by too frequent compliance with solicitations to sing, for that her manner was somewhat ungraceful, and her voice had no great compass. It is true, says Floretta, when I sung three nights ago at lady Sprightly's I was hoarse with a cold; but I sing for my own satisfaction, and am not in the least pain whether I am liked. However, my dear Felicia's kindness is not the less, and I shall always think myself happy in so true a friend.

From this time they never saw each other without mutual professions of esteem, and declarations of confidence, but went soon after into the country to visit their relations. When they came back, they were prevailed on, by the importunity of new acquaintance, to take lodgings in different parts of the town, and had frequent occasion, when they met, to bewail the distance at which they were placed, and the uncertainty which each experienced of finding the other at home.

Thus are the fondest and firmest friendships dissolved, by such openness and sincerity as interrupt our enjoyment of our own approbation, or recall us to the remembrance of those failings which we are more willing to indulge than to correct.

It is by no means necessary to imagine, that he who is offended at advice, was ignorant of the fault, and resents the admonition as a false charge; for perhaps it is most natural to be enraged, when there is the strongest conviction of our own guilt. While we can easily defend our character, we are no more disturbed at an accusation, than we are alarmed by an enemy whom we are sure to conquer; and whose attack, therefore, will bring us honour without danger. But when a man feels the reprehension of a friend seconded by his own heart, he is easily heated into resentment and revenge, either because he hoped that the fault of which he was conscious, had escaped the notice of others; or that his friend

had looked upon it with tenderness and extenuation, and excused it for the sake of his other virtues; or had considered him as too wise to need advice, or too delicate to be shocked with reproach: or, because we cannot feel without pain those reflections roused which we have been endeavouring to lay asleep: and when pain has produced anger, who would not willingly believe, that it ought to be discharged on others, rather than on himself.

The resentment produced by sincerity, whatever be its immediate cause, is so certain, and generally so keen, that very few have magnanimity sufficient for the practice of a duty, which, above most others, exposes its votaries to hardships and persecutions; yet friendship without it is of very little value, since the great use of so close an intimacy is, that our virtues may be guarded and encouraged, and our vices repressed in their first appearance by timely detection and salutary remonstrances.

It is decreed by Providence, that nothing truly valuable shall be obtained in our present state, but with difficulty and danger. He that hopes for that advantage which is to be gained from unrestrained communication, must sometimes hazard, by unpleasing truths, that friendship which he aspires to merit. The chief rule to be observed in the exercise of this dangerous office, is to preserve it pure from all mixture of interest or vanity; to forbear admonition or reproof, when our consciences tell us that they are incited, not by the hopes of reforming faults, but the desire of showing our discernment, or gratifying our own pride by the mortification of another. It is not indeed certain, that the most refined caution will find a proper time for bringing a man to the knowledge of his own failings, or the most zealous benevolence reconcile him to that judgment, by which they are detected; but he who endeavours only the happiness of him whom he reproves, will always have either the satisfaction of obtaining or deserving kindness; if he succeeds, he benefits his friend; and if he fails, he has at least the consciousness that he suffers for only doing well.

No. 41. Tuesday, August 7, 1750.

Nulla recordanti lux est ingrata gravisque,
Nulla fuit cujus non meminisse velit.
Ampliat ætatis spatium sibi vir bonus, hoc est
Vivere bis, vita posse priore frui. Mart.

No day's remembrance shall the good regret,
Nor wish one bitter moment to forget:
They stretch the limits of this narrow span;
And, by enjoying, live past life again. F. Lewis.

So few of the hours of life are filled up with objects adequate to the mind of man, and so frequently are we in want of present pleasure or employment, that we are forced to have recourse every moment to the past and future for supplemental satisfactions, and relieve the vacuities of our being, by recollection of former passages, or anticipation of events to come.

I cannot but consider this necessity of searching on every side for matter on which the attention may be employed, as a strong proof of the superiour and celestial nature of the soul of man. We have no reason to believe that other creatures have higher faculties, or more extensive capacities, than the preservation of themselves, or their species, requires; they seem always to be fully employed, or to be completely at ease without employment, to feel few intellectual miseries or pleasures, and to have no exuberance of understanding to lay out upon curiosity or caprice, but to have their minds exactly adapted to their bodies, with few other ideas than such as corporal pain or pleasure impress upon them.

Of memory, which makes so large a part of the excellence of the human soul, and which has so much influence upon all its other powers, but a small portion has been allotted to the animal world. We do not find the grief with which the dams lament the loss of their young proportionate to the tenderness with which they caress, the assiduity with which they feed, or the vehemence with which they defend them. Their regard for their offspring, when it is before their eyes, is not, in appearance, less than that of a human parent; but when it is taken away, it is very soon forgotten, and, after a short absence, if brought again, wholly disregarded.

That they have very little remembrance of any thing once out of the reach of their senses, and scarce any power of comparing the present with the past, and regulating their con-

clusions from experience, may be gathered from this, that their intellects are produced in their full perfection. The sparrow that was hatched last spring makes her first nest the ensuing season, of the same materials, and with the same art, as in any following year; and the hen conducts and shelters her first brood of chickens with all the prudence that she ever attains.

It has been asked by men who love to perplex any thing that is plain to common understandings, how reason differs from instinct; and Prior has with no great propriety made Solomon himself declare, that to distinguish them is *the fool's ignorance, and the pedant's pride.* To give an accurate answer to a question, of which the terms are not completely understood, is impossible; we do not know in what either reason or instinct consist, and therefore cannot tell with exactness how they differ; but surely he that contemplates a ship and a bird's nest, will not be long without finding out, that the idea of the one was impressed at once, and continued through all the progressive descents of the species, without variation or improvement; and that the other is the result of experiments compared with experiments, has grown, by accumulated observation, from less to greater excellence, and exhibits the collective knowledge of different ages and various professions.

Memory is the purveyor of reason, the power which places those images before the mind upon which the judgment is to be exercised, and which treasures up the determinations that are once passed, as the rules of future action, or grounds of subsequent conclusions.

It is, indeed, the faculty of remembrance, which may be said to place us in the class of moral agents. If we were to act only in consequence of some immediate impulse, and receive no direction from internal motives of choice, we should be pushed forward by an invincible fatality, without power or reason for the most part to prefer one thing to another, because we could make no comparison but of objects which might both happen to be present.

We owe to memory not only the increase of our knowledge, and our progress in rational inquiries, but many other intellectual pleasures. Indeed, almost all that we can be said to enjoy is past or future; the present is in perpetual motion, leaves us as soon as it arrives, ceases to be present before its presence is well perceived, and is only known to have existed by the effects which it leaves behind. The greatest part of our ideas arises, therefore, from the view before or behind us, and we are happy or miserable, according as we are af-

fected by the survey of our life, or our prospect of future existence.

With regard to futurity, when events are at such a distance from us that we cannot take the whole concatenation into our view, we have generally power enough over our imagination to turn it upon pleasing scenes, and can promise ourselves riches, honours, and delights, without intermingling those vexations and anxieties with which all human enjoyments are polluted. If fear breaks in on one side, and alarms us with dangers and disappointments, we can call in hope on the other, to solace us with rewards, and escapes, and victories; so that we are seldom without means of palliating remote evils, and can generally sooth ourselves to tranquillity whenever any troublesome presage happens to attack us.

It is therefore, I believe, much more common for the solitary and thoughtful to amuse themselves with schemes of the future, than reviews of the past. For the future is pliant and ductile, and will be easily moulded by a strong fancy into any form. But the images which memory presents are of a stubborn and untractable nature, the objects of remembrance have already existed, and left their signature behind them, impressed upon the mind, so as to defy all attempts of rasure or of change.

As the satisfactions, therefore, arising from memory are less arbitrary, they are more solid, and are, indeed, the only joys which we can call our own. Whatever we have once reposited, as Dryden expresses it, *in the sacred treasure of the past*, is out of the reach of accident, or violence, nor can be lost either by our own weakness, or another's malice.

——Non tamen irritum
Quodcunque retro est efficiet neque
Diffinget, infectumque reddet,
Quod fugiens semel hora vexit.

Be fair or foul, or rain or shine,
The joys I have possess'd in spite of fate are mine.
Not heav'n itself upon the past has pow'r,
But what has been has been, and I have had my hour. DRYDEN.

There is certainly no greater happiness than to be able to look back on a life usefully and virtuously employed, to trace our own progress in existence, by such tokens as excite neither shame nor sorow. Life, in which nothing has been done or suffered to distinguish one day from another, is to him that has passed it, as if it had never been, except that he is conscious how ill he has husbanded the great deposit of his Creator. Life, made memorable by crimes, and diversified

through its several periods by wickedness, is indeed easily reviewed, but reviewed only with horrour and remorse.

The great consideration which ought to influence us in the use of the present moment, is to arise from the effect, which, as well or ill applied, it must have upon the time to come; for though its actual existence be inconceivably short, yet its effects are unlimited; and there is not the smallest point of time but may extend its consequences, either to our hurt or our advantage, through all eternity, and give us reason to remember it forever, with anguish or exultation.

The time of life, in which memory seems particularly to claim preponderance over the other faculties of the mind, is our declining age. It has been remarked by former writers, that old men are generally narrative, and fall easily into recitals of past transactions, and accounts of persons known to them in their youth. When we approach the verge of the grave it is more eminently true;

Vitæ summa brevis spem nos vetat inchoare longam.

Life's span forbids thee to extend thy cares,
And stretch thy hopes beyond thy years. CREECH.

We have no longer any possibility of great vicissitudes in our favour; the changes which are to happen in the world will come too late for our accommodation; and those who have no hope before them, and to whom their present state is painful and irksome, must of necessity turn their thoughts back to try what retrospect will afford. It ought, therefore to be the care of those who wish to pass the last hours with comfort, to lay up such a treasure of pleasing ideas, as shall support the expenses of that time, which is to depend wholly upon the fund already acquired.

——*Petite hinc, juvenesque senesque*
Finem animo certum, miserisque viatica curis.

Seek here, ye young, the anchor of your mind;
Here, suff'ring age, a bless'd provision find. ELPHINSTON.

In youth, however unhappy, we solace ourselves with the hope of better fortune, and however vicious, appease our consciences with intentions of repentance; but the time comes at last, in which life has no more to promise, in which happiness can be drawn only from recollection, and virtue will be all that we can recollect with pleasure.

No. 42. Saturday, August 11, 1750.

Mihi tarda fluunt ingrataque tempora. Hor.

How heavily my time revolves along. Elphinston.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Mr. Rambler—I am no great admirer of grave writings, and therefore very frequently lay your papers aside before I have read them through; yet I cannot but confess that by slow degrees, you have raised my opinion of your understanding; and that, though I believe it will be long before I can be prevailed upon to regard you with much kindness, you have, however, more of my esteem than those whom I sometimes make happy with opportunities to fill my teapot, or pick up my fan. I shall therefore choose you for the confident of my distresses, and ask your counsel with regard to the means of conquering or escaping them, though I never expect from you any of that softness and pliancy which constitutes the perfection of a companion for the ladies; as, in the place where I now am, I have recourse to the mastiff for protection, though I have no intention of making him a lapdog.

My mamma is a very fine lady, who has more numerous and more frequent assemblies at her house than any other person in the same quarter of the town. I was bred from my earliest infancy in a perpetual tumult of pleasure, and remember to have heard of little else than messages, visits, playhouses, and balls; of the awkwardness of one woman, and of the coquetry of another; the charming convenience of some rising fashion, the difficulty of playing a new game, the incidents of a masquerade, and the dresses of a court-knight. I knew before I was ten years old all the rules of paying and receiving visits, and to how much civility every one of my acquaintance was entitled; and was able to return, with the proper degree of reserve or of vivacity, the stated and established answer to every compliment; so that I was very soon celebrated as a wit and a beauty, and had heard before I was thirteen all that is ever said to a young lady. My mother was generous to so uncommon a degree as to be pleased with my advances into life, and allowed me, without envy or reproof, to enjoy the same happiness with herself; though most women about her own age were very angry to see young girls

so forward, and many fine gentlemen told her how cruel it was to throw new chains upon mankind, and to tyrannise over them at the same time with her own charms and those of her daughter.

I have now lived two-and-twenty years, and have passed of each year nine months in town, and three at Richmond: so that my time has been spent uniformly in the same company, and the same amusements, except as fashion has introduced new diversions, or the revolutions of the gay world have afforded new successions of wits and beaux. However, my mother is so good an œconomist of pleasure, that I have no spare hours upon my hands; for every morning brings some new appointment, and every night is hurried away by the necessity of making our appearance at different places, and of being with one lady at the opera, and with another at the card-table.

When the time came of settling our scheme of felicity for the summer, it was determined that I should pay a visit to a rich aunt in a remote county. As you know the chief conversation of all tea-tables, in the spring, arises from a communication of the manner in which time is to be passed till winter, it was a great relief to the barrenness of our topics, to relate the pleasures that were in store for me, to describe my uncle's seat, with the park and gardens, the charming walks and beautiful waterfalls; and every one told me how much she envied me, and what satisfaction she had once enjoyed in a situation of the same kind.

As we are all credulous in our own favour, and willing to imagine some latent satisfaction in any thing which we have not experienced, I will confess to you, without restraint, that I had suffered my head to be filled with expectations of some nameless pleasure in a rural life, and that I hoped for the happy hour that should set me free from noise, and flutter, and ceremony, dismiss me to the peaceful shade, and lull me in content and tranquillity. To solace myself under the misery of delay, I sometimes heard a studious lady of my acquaintance read pastorals; I was delighted with scarce any talk but of leaving the town, and never went to bed without dreaming of groves, and meadows, and frisking lambs.

At length I had all my clothes in a trunk, and saw the coach at the door; I sprung in with ecstacy, quarrelled with my maid for being too long in taking leave of the other servants, and rejoiced as the ground grew less which lay between me and the completion of my wishes. A few days brought me to a large old house, encompassed on three sides with woody hills, and looking from the front on a gentle

river, the sight of which renewed all my expectations of pleasure, and gave me some regret for having lived so long without the enjoyment which these delightful scenes were now to afford me. My aunt came out to receive me, but in a dress so far removed from the present fashion, that I could scarcely look upon her without laughter, which would have been no kind requital for the trouble which she had taken to make herself fine against my arrival. The night and the next morning were driven along with inquiries about our family; my aunt then explained our pedigree, and told me stories of my great grandfather's bravery in the civil wars; nor was it less than three days before I could persuade her to leave me to myself.

At last œconomy prevailed; she went in the usual manner about her own affairs, and I was at liberty to range in the wilderness, and sit by the cascade. The novelty of the objects about me pleased me for a while, but after a few days they were new no longer, and I soon began to perceive that the country was not my element; that shades, and flowers, and lawns, and waters, had very soon exhausted all their power of pleasing, and that I had not in myself any fund of satisfaction, with which I could supply the loss of my customary amusements.

I unhappily told my aunt, in the first warmth of our embraces, that I had leave to stay with her ten weeks. Six only are yet gone, and how shall I live through the remaining four? I go out and return; I pluck a flower, and throw it away; I catch an insect, and when I have examined its colours, set it at liberty; I fling a pebble into the water, and see one circle spread after another. When it chances to rain, I walk in the great hall, and watch the minute-hand upon the dial, or play with a litter of kittens, which the cat happens to have brought in a lucky time.

My aunt is afraid I shall grow melancholy, and therefore encourages the neighbouring gentry to visit us. They came at first with great eagerness to see the fine lady from London; but when we met, we had no common topic on which we could converse: they had no curiosity after plays, operas, or music: and I find as little satisfaction from their accounts of the quarrels or alliances of families, whose names, when once I can escape, I shall never hear. The women have now seen me, know how my gown is made, and are satisfied; the men are generally afraid of me, and say little, because they think themselves not at liberty to talk rudely.

Thus I am condemned to solitude; the day moves slowly forward, and I see the dawn with uneasiness, because I consi-

der that night is at a great distance. I have tried to sleep by a brook, but find its murmurs ineffectual; so that I am forced to be awake at least twelve hours, without visits, without cards, without laughter, and without flattery. I walk because I am disgusted with sitting still, and sit down because I am weary with walking. I have no motive to action, nor any object of love, or hate, or fear, or inclination. I cannot dress with spirit, for I have neither rival nor admirer; I cannot dance without a partner; nor be kind or cruel, without a lover.

Such is the life of Euphelia, and such it is likely to continue for a month to come. I have not yet declared against existence, nor called upon the destinies to cut my thread; but I have sincerely resolved not to condemn myself to such another summer, nor too hastily to flatter myself with happiness. Yet I have heard, Mr. Rambler, of those who never thought themselves so much at ease as in solitude, and cannot but suspect it to be some way or other my own fault, that, without great pain, either of mind or body, I am thus weary of myself: that the current of youth stagnates, and that I am languishing in a dead calm, for want of some external impulse. I shall therefore think you a benefactor to our sex, if you will teach me the art of living alone; for I am confident that a thousand and a thousand ladies, who affect to talk with ecstacies of the pleasures of the country, are in reality, like me, longing for the winter, and wishing to be delivered from themselves by company and diversion.

I am, Sir, Yours,

EUPHELIA.

No. 43. TUESDAY, August 14, 1750.

Flumine perpetuo torrens solet acrius ire,
Sed tamen hæc brevis est, illa perennis aqua. OVID.

In course impetuous soon the torrent dries,
The brook a constant peaceful stream supplies. F. LEWIS.

IT is observed by those who have written on the constitution of the human body, and the original of those diseases by which it is afflicted, that every man comes into the world morbid, that there is no temperature so exactly regulated, but that some humour is fatally predominant, and that we are generally impregnated, in our first entrance upon life, with

the seeds of that malady, which, in time, shall bring us to the grave.

This remark has been extended by others to the intellectual faculties. Some that imagine themselves to have looked with more than common penetration into human nature, have endeavoured to persuade us that each man is born with a mind formed peculiarly for certain purposes, and with desires unalterably determined to particular objects, from which the attention cannot be long diverted, and which alone, as they are well or ill pursued, must produce the praise or blame, the happiness or misery, of his future life.

This position has not, indeed, been hitherto proved with strength proportionate to the assurance with which it had been advanced, and perhaps will never gain much prevalence by a close examination.

If the doctrine of innate ideas be itself disputable, there seems to be little hope of establishing an opinion, which supposes that even complications of ideas have been given us at our birth, and that we are made by nature ambitious, or covetous, before we know the meaning of either power or money.

Yet as every step in the progression of existence changes our position with respect to the things about us, so as to lay us open to new assaults and particular dangers, and subjects us to inconveniences from which any other situation is exempt; as a public or a private life, youth and age, wealth and poverty, have all some evil closely adherent, which cannot wholly be escaped but by quitting the state to which it is annexed, and submitting to the encumbrances of some other condition; so it cannot be denied that every difference in the structure of the mind has its advantages and its wants: and that failures and defects being inseparable from humanity, however the powers of understanding be extended or contracted, there will on one side or the other always be an avenue to errour and miscarriage.

There seem to be some souls suited to great, and others to little employments; some formed to soar aloft, and take in wide views, and others to grovel on the ground, and confine their regard to a narrow sphere. Of these the one is always in danger of becoming useless by a daring negligence, the other by scrupulous solicitude: the one collects many ideas, but confused and indistinct; the other is busied in minute accuracy, but without compass and without dignity.

The general errour of those who possess powerful and elevated understandings, is, that they form schemes of too great extent, and flatter themselves too hastily with success; they

feel their own force to be great, and by the complacency with which every man surveys himself, imagine it still greater: they therefore look out for undertakings worthy of their abilities, and engage in them with very little precaution, for they imagine that without premeditated measures, they shall be able to find expedients in all difficulties. They are naturally apt to consider all prudential maxims as below their regard, to treat with contempt those securities and resources which others know themselves obliged to provide, and disdain to accomplish their purposes by established means, and common gradations.

Precipitation thus incited by the pride of intellectual superiority, is very fatal to great designs. The resolution of the combat is seldom equal to the vehemence of the charge. He that meets with an opposition which he did not expect, loses his courage. The violence of his first onset is succeeded by a lasting and unconquerable languor; miscarriage makes him fearful of giving way to new hopes; and the contemplation of an attempt in which he has fallen below his own expectations is painful and vexatious; he therefore naturally turns his attention to more pleasing objects, and habituates his imagination to other entertainments, till, by slow degrees, he quits his first pursuit, and suffers some other project to take possession of his thoughts, in which the same ardour of mind promises him again certain success, and which disappointments of the same kind compel him to abandon.

Thus too much vigour in the beginning of an undertaking, often intercepts and prevents the steadiness and perseverance always necessary in the conduct of a complicated scheme, where many interests are to be connected, many movements to be adjusted, and the joint effort of distinct and independent powers to be directed to asi ngle point. In all important events which have been suddenly brought to pass, chance has been the agent rather than reason; and, therefore, however those who seemed to preside in the transaction, may have been celebrated by such as loved or feared them, succeeding times have commonly considered them as fortunate rather than prudent. Every design in which the connection is regularly traced from the first motion to the last, must be formed and executed by calm intrepidity, and requires not only courage which danger cannot turn aside, but constancy which fatigues cannot weary, and contrivance which impediments cannot exhaust.

All the performances of human art, at which we look with praise or wonder, are instances of the resistless force of perseverance: it is by this that the quarry becomes a pyramid,

and that distant countries are united with canals. If a man was to compare the effect of a single stroke of the pick-axe, or of one impression of the spade, with the general design and last result, he would be overwhelmed by the sense of their disproportion; yet those petty operations, incessantly continued, in time surmount the greatest difficulties, and mountains are levelled, and oceans bounded, by the slender force of human beings.

It is therefore of the utmost importance, that those who have any intention of deviating from the beaten roads of life, and acquiring a reputation superior to names hourly swept away by time among the refuse of fame, should add to their reason and their spirit, the power of persisting in their purposes; acquire the art of sapping what they cannot batter, and the habit of vanquishing obstinate resistance by obstinate attacks.

The student who would build his knowledge on solid foundations, and proceed by just degrees to the pinnacles of truth, is directed by the great philosopher of France to begin by doubting of his own existence. In like manner, whoever would complete any arduous and intricate enterprise, should, as soon as his imagination can cool after the first blaze of hope, place before his own eyes every possible embarrassment that may retard or defeat him. He should first question the probability of success, and then endeavour to remove the objections that he has raised. It is proper, says old Markham,* to exercise your horse on the more inconvenient side of the course, that if he should, in the race, be forced upon it, he may not be discouraged; and Horace advises his poetical friend to consider every day as the last which he shall enjoy, because that will always give pleasure which we receive beyond our hopes. If we alarm ourselves beforehand with more difficulties than we really find, we shall be animated by unexpected facility with double spirit; and if we find our cautions and fears justified by the consequence, there will however happen nothing against which provision has not been made, no sudden shock will be received, nor will the main scheme be disconcerted.

There is, indeed, some danger lest he that too scrupulously balances probabilities, and too perspicaciously foresees obstacles, should remain always in a state of inaction, without venturing upon attempts on which he may perhaps spend his

* Gervase Markham, in his book entitled "Perfect Horsemanship," 12mo. 1671. He was a dramatic poet, and a voluminous writer on various subjects.

labour without advantage. But previous despondence is not the fault of those for whom this essay is designed: they who require to be warned against precipitation, will not suffer more fear to intrude into their contemplations than is necessary to allay the effervescence of an agitated fancy. As Des Cartes has kindly shown how a man may prove to himself his own existence, if once he can be prevailed upon to question it, so the ardent and adventurous will not be long without finding some plausible extenuation of the greatest difficulties. Such, indeed, is the uncertainty of all human affairs, that security and despair are equal follies; and as it is presumption and arrogance to anticipate triumphs, it is weakness and cowardice to prognosticate miscarriages. The numbers that have been stopped in their career of happiness are sufficient to show the uncertainty of human foresight; but there are not wanting contrary instances of such success obtained against all appearances, as may warrant the boldest flights of genius, if they are supported by unshaken perseverance.

No. 44. Saturday, August 18, 1750.

Ὄναρ ἐκ Διός ἐστι. Homer.

——Dreams descend from Jove. Pope.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—I had lately a very remarkable dream, which made so strong an impression on me, that I remember it every word; and if you are not better employed, you may read the relation of it as follows:

Methought I was in the midst of a very entertaining set of company, and extremely delighted in attending to a lively conversation, when on a sudden I perceived one of the most shocking figures imagination can frame, advancing towards me. She was dressed in black, her skin was contracted into a thousand wrinkles, her eyes sunk deep in her head, and her complexion pale and livid as the countenance of death. Her looks were filled with terrour and unrelenting severity, and her hands armed with whips and scorpions. As soon as she came near, with a horrid frown, and a voice that chilled my very blood, she bid me follow her. I obeyed, and she led me through rugged paths, beset with briars and

thorns, into a deep solitary valley. Wherever she passed, the fading verdure withered beneath her steps; her pestilential breath infected the air with malignant vapours, obscured the lustre of the sun, and involved the fair face of heaven in universal gloom. Dismal howlings resounded through the forest, from every baleful tree the night raven uttered his dreadful note, and the prospect was filled with desolation and horrour. In the midst of this tremendous scene, my execrable guide addressed me in the following manner:

"Retire with me, O rash unthinking mortal, from the vain allurements of a deceitful world, and learn that pleasure was not designed the portion of human life. Man was born to mourn and to be wretched; this is the condition of all below the stars, and whoever endeavours to oppose it, acts in contradiction to the will of heaven. Fly then from the fatal enchantments of youth, and social delight, and here consecrate the solitary hours to lamentation and wo. Misery is the duty of all sublunary beings, and every enjoyment is an offence to the Deity, who is to be worshipped only by the mortification of every sense of pleasure, and the everlasting exercise of sighs and tears."

This melancholy picture of life quite sunk my spirits, and seemed to annihilate every principle of joy within me. I threw myself beneath a blasted yew, where the winds blew cold and dismal round my head, and dreadful apprehensions chilled my heart. Here I resolved to lie till the hand of death, which I impatiently invoked, should put an end to the miseries of a life so deplorably wretched. In this sad situation, I espied on one hand of me a deep muddy river, whose heavy waves rolled on in slow sullen murmurs. Here I determined to plunge, and was just upon the brink, when I found myself suddenly drawn back. I turned about, and was surprised by the sight of the loveliest object I had ever beheld. The most engaging charms of youth and beauty appeared in all her form; effulgent glories sparkled in her eyes, and their awful splendours were softened by the gentlest looks of compassion and peace. At her approach the frightful spectre who had before tormented me, vanished away, and with her all the horrours she had caused. The gloomy clouds brightened into cheerful sunshine, the groves recovered their verdure, and the whole region looked gay and blooming as the garden of Eden. I was quite transported at this unexpected change, and reviving pleasure began to glad my thoughts, when, with a look of inexpressible sweetness, my beauteous deliverer thus uttered her divine instructions:

"My name is *Religion*. I am the offspring of *Truth* and *Love*, and the parent of *Benevolence*, *Hope*, and *Joy*. That monster from whose power I have freed you is called *Superstition*, she is the child of *Discontent*, and her followers are *Fear* and *Sorrow*. Thus different as we are, she has often the insolence to assume my name and character, and seduces unhappy mortals to think us the same, till she, at length, drives them to the borders of *Despair*, that dreadful abyss into which you were just going to sink.

"Look round and survey the various beauties of the globe, which Heaven has destined for the seat of the human race, and consider whether a world thus exquisitely framed could be meant for the abode of misery and pain. For what end has the lavish hand of Providence diffused such innumerable objects of delight, but that all might rejoice in the privilege of existence, and be filled with gratitude to the beneficent author of it? Thus to enjoy the blessings he has sent, is virtue and obedience: and to reject them merely as means of pleasure, is pitiable ignorance or absurd perverseness. Infinite goodness is the source of created existence: the proper tendency of every rational being, from the highest order of raptured seraphs, to the meanest rank of men, is to rise incessantly from lower degrees of happiness to higher. They have each faculties assigned them for various orders of delights."

"What," cried I, "is this the language of *Religion?* Does she lead her votaries through flowery paths, and bid them pass an unlaborious life? Where are the painful toils of virtue, the mortifications of penitence, the self-denying exercises of saints and heroes?"

"The true enjoyments of a reasonable being," answered she mildly, "do not consist in unbounded indulgence, or luxurious ease, in the tumult of passions, the languor of indolence, or the flutter of light amusements. Yielding to immoral pleasure corrupts the mind, living to animal trifling ones debases it; both in their degree disqualify it for its genuine good, and consign it over to wretchedness. Whoever would be really happy, must make the diligent and regular exercise of his superior powers his chief attention, adoring the perfections of his Maker, expressing good will to his fellow creatures, cultivating inward rectitude. To his lower faculties he must allow such gratifications as will, by refreshing him, invigorate his nobler pursuits. In the regions inhabited by angelic natures, unmingled felicity for ever blooms, joy flows there with a perpetual and abundant stream, nor needs there any mound to check its course. Beings conscious of a

frame of mind originally diseased, as all the human race has cause to be, must use the regimen of a stricter self-government. Whoever has been guilty of voluntary excesses must patiently submit both to the painful workings of nature, and needful severities of medicine, in order to his cure. Still he is entitled to a moderate share of whatever alleviating accommodations this fair mansion of his merciful parent affords, consistent with his recovery. And in proportion as this recovery advances, the liveliest joy will spring from his secret sense of an amended and improved heart. So far from the horrours of despair is the condition even of the guilty. Shudder, poor mortal, at the thought of the gulf into which thou wast but now going to plunge.

"While the most faulty have ever encouragement to amend, the more innocent soul will be supported with still sweeter consolations under all its experience of human infirmities; supported by the gladdening assurances that every sincere endeavour to outgrow them shall be assisted, accepted, and rewarded. To such a one the lowliest self-abasement is but a deep-laid foundation for the most elevated hopes; since they who faithfully examine and acknowledge what they are, shall be enabled under my conduct to become what they desire. The Christian and the hero are inseparable: and to aspirings of unassuming trust, and filial confidence, are set no bounds. To him who is animated with a view of obtaining approbation from the sovereign of the universe, no difficulty is insurmountable. Secure in this pursuit of every needful aid, his conflict with the severest pains and trials, is little more than the vigorous exercises of a mind in health. His patient dependence on that Providence which looks through all eternity, his silent resignation, his ready accommodation of his thoughts and behaviour to its inscrutable ways, is at once the most excellent sort of self-denial, and a source of the most exalted transports. Society is the true sphere of human virtue. In social, active life, difficulties will perpetually be met with; restraints of many kinds will be necessary; and studying to behave right in respect of these is a discipline of the human heart, useful to others, and improving to itself. Suffering is no duty, but where it is necessary to avoid guilt, or to do good; nor pleasure a crime, but where it strengthens the influence of bad inclinations, or lessens the generous activity of virtue. The happiness allotted to man in his present state, is indeed faint and low, compared with his immortal prospects, and noble capacities; but yet whatever portion of it the distributing hand of heaven offers to each individual, is

a needful support and refreshment for the present moment, so far as it may not hinder the attaining of final destination.

"Return then with me from continual misery to moderate enjoyment and grateful alacrity. Return from the contracted views of solitude to the proper duties of a relative and dependent being. Religion is not confined to cells and closets, nor restrained to sullen retirement. These are the gloomy doctrines of *Superstition*, by which she endeavours to break those chains of benevolence and social affection, that link the welfare of every particular with that of the whole. Remember that the greatest honour you can pay to the author of your being is by such a cheerful behaviour as discovers a mind satisfied with his dispensations."

Here my preceptress paused, and I was going to express my acknowledgments for her discourse, when a ring of bells from the neighbouring village, and a new-risen sun darting his beams through my windows, awaked me.

I am yours, &c.*

No. 45. Tuesday, August 21, 1750.

Ηπερ μεγίςη γίγνεται σωτηρια,
Οταν γυνη πρός ἄνδρα μη διχοςατη,
Νυν δ' εκθρα παντα——— Euqip.

This is the chief felicity of life,
That concord smile on the connubial bed;
But now 'tis hatred all.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—Though in the dissertations which you have given us on marriage, very just cautions are laid down against the common causes of infelicity, and the necessity of having, in that important choice, the first regard to virtue, is carefully included; yet I cannot think the subject so much exhausted, but that a little reflection would present to the mind many questions, in the discussion of which great numbers are interested, and many precepts which deserve to be more particularly and forcibly impressed.

You seem, like most of the writers that have gone before you, to have allowed as an uncontested principle, that marriage is generally unhappy: but I know not whether a man

* This paper, and No. 100, were written by Mrs. Elizabeth Carter, of Deal in Kent, now living.

who professes to think for himself, and concludes from his own observations, does not depart from his character when he follows the crowd thus implicitly, and receives maxims without recalling them to a new examination, especially when they comprise so wide a circuit of life, and include such variety of circumstances. As I have an equal right with others to give my opinion of the objects about me, and a better title to determine concerning that state which I have tried, than many who talk of it without experience, I am unwilling to be restrained by mere authority from advancing what, I believe, an accurate view of the world will confirm, that marriage is not commonly unhappy, otherwise than as life is unhappy; and that most of those who complain of connubial miseries, have as much satisfaction as their nature would have admitted, or their conduct procured, in any other condition.

It is indeed, common to hear both sexes repine at their change, relate the happiness of their earlier years, blame the folly and rashness of their own choice, and warn those whom they see coming into the world against the same precipitance and infatuation. But it is to be remembered, that the days which they so much wish to call back, are the days not only of celibacy but of youth, the days of novelty and improvement, of ardour and of hope, of health and vigour of body, of gaiety and lightness of heart. It is not easy to surround life with any circumstances in which youth will not be delightful; and I am afraid that whether married or unmarried, we shall find the vesture of terrestrial existence more heavy and cumbrous, the longer it is worn.

That they censure themselves for the indiscretion of their choice, is not a sufficient proof that they have chosen ill, since we see the same discontent at every other part of life which we cannot change. Converse with almost any man, grown old in a profession, and you will find him regretting that he did not enter into some different course, to which he too late finds his genius better adapted, or in which he discovers that wealth and honour are more easily attained. "The merchant," says Horace, "envies the soldier, and the soldier recounts the felicity of the merchant; the lawyer, when his clients harass him, calls out for the quiet of the countryman; and the countryman, when business calls him to town, proclaims that there is no happiness but amidst opulence and crowds." Every man recounts the inconveniencies of his own station, and thinks those of any other less, because he has not felt them. Thus the married praise the ease and freedom of a single state, and the single fly to marriage for the weariness of solitude. From all our observations we may

collect with certainty, that misery is the lot of man, but cannot discover in what particular condition it will find most alleviations; or whether all external appendages are not, as we use them, the causes either of good or ill.

Whoever feels great pain, naturally hopes for ease from change of posture; he changes it, and finds himself equally tormented: and of the same kind are the expedients by which we endeavour to obviate or elude those uneasinesses, to which mortality will always be subject. It is not likely that the married state is eminently miserable, since we see such numbers, whom the death of their partners has set free from it, entering it again.

Wives and husbands are, indeed, incessantly complaining of each other; and there would be reason for imagining that almost every house was infested with perverseness or oppression beyond human sufferance, did we not know upon how small occasions some minds burst out into lamentations and reproaches, and how naturally every animal revenges his pain upon those who happen to be near, without any nice examination of its cause. We are always willing to fancy ourselves within a little of happiness, and when, with repeated efforts, we cannot reach it, persuade ourselves that it is intercepted by an ill-paired mate, since, if we could find any other obstacle, it would be our own fault that it was not removed.

Anatomists have often remarked, that though our diseases are suficiently numerous and severe, yet when we inquire into the structure of the body, the tenderness of some parts, the minuteness of others, and the immense multiplicity of animal functions that must concur to the healthful and vigorous exercise of all our powers, there appears reason to wonder rather that we are preserved so long, than that we perish so soon, and that our frame subsists for a single day, or hour, without disorder, rather than it should be broken or obstructed by violence of accidents, or length of time.

The same reflection arises in my mind, upon observation of the manner in which marriage is frequently contracted. When I see the avaricious and crafty taking companions to their tables and their beds without any inquiry, but after farms and money; or the giddy and thoughtless uniting themselves for life to those whom they have only seen by the light of tapers at a ball; when parents make articles for their children, without inquiring after their consent; when some marry for heirs to disappoint their brothers, and others throw themselves into the arms of those whom they do not love, because they have found themselves rejected where they were

most solicitous to please: when some marry because their servants cheat them, some because they squander their own money, some because their houses are pestered with company, some because they will live like other people, and some only because they are sick of themselves, I am not so much inclined to wonder that marriage is sometimes unhappy, as that it appears so little loaded with calamity; and cannot but conclude that society has something in itself eminently agreeable to human nature, when I find its pleasures so great, that even the ill choice of a companion can hardly over-balance them.

By the ancient custom of the Muscovites, the men and women never saw each other till they were joined beyond the power of parting. It may be suspected that by this method many unsuitable matches were produced, and many tempers associated that were not qualified to give pleasure to each other. Yet, perhaps, among a people so little delicate, where the paucity of gratifications, and the uniformity of life, gave no opportunity for imagination to interpose its objections, there was not much danger of capricious dislike; and while they felt neither cold nor hunger, they might live quietly together, without any thought of the defects of one another.

Amongst us, whom knowledge has made nice, and affluence wanton, there are, indeed, more cautions requisite to secure tranquillity; and yet if we observe the manner in which those converse, who have singled out each other for marriage, we shall, perhaps, not think that the Russians lost much by their restraint. For the whole endeavour of both parties, during the time of courtship, is to hinder themselves from being known, and to disguise their natural temper, and real desires, in hypocritical imitation, studied compliance, and continual affectation. From the time that their love is avowed, neither sees the other but in a mask, and the cheat is managed often on both sides with so much art, and discovered afterwards with so much abruptness, that each has reason to suspect that some transformation has happened on the wedding night, and that, by a strange imposture, one has been courted, and another married.

I desire you, therefore, Mr. Rambler, to question all who shall hereafter come to you with matrimonial complaints, concerning their behaviour in the time of courtship, and inform them that they are neither to wonder nor repine, when a contract begun with fraud has ended in disappointment.

I am, &c.

No. 46. Saturday, August 25, 1750.

——Genus, et proavos, et quæ non fecimus ipsi,
Vix ea nostra voco.

Nought from my birth or ancestors I claim;
All is my own, my honour and my shame.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—Since I find that you have paid so much regard to my complaints as to publish them, I am inclined by vanity, or gratitude, to continue our correspondence; and indeed, without either of these motives, am glad of an opportunity to write, for I am not accustomed to keep in any thing that swells my heart, and have here none with whom I can freely converse. While I am thus employed, some tedious hours will slip away, and when I return to watch the clock, I shall find that I have disburdened myself of part of the day.

You perceive that I do not pretend to write with much consideration of any thing but my own convenience; and, not to conceal from you my real sentiments, the little time which I have spent, against my will, in solitary meditation, has not much contributed to my veneration for authors. I have now sufficient reason to suspect, that, with all your splendid professions of wisdom, and seeming regard for truth, you have very little sincerity; that you either write what you do not think, and willingly impose upon mankind, or that you take no care to think right, but while you set up yourselves as guides, mislead your followers by credulity or negligence; that you produce to the public whatever notions you can speciously maintain, or elegantly express, without inquiring whether they are just, and transcribe hereditary falsehoods from old authors perhaps as ignorant and careless as yourselves.

You may perhaps wonder that I express myself with so much acrimony on a question in which women are supposed to have very little interest; and you are likely enough, for I have seen many instances of the sauciness of scholars, to tell me that I am more properly employed in playing with my kittens, than in giving myself airs of criticism, and censuring the learned. But you are mistaken, if you imagine that I am to be intimidated by your contempt, or silenced by your

reproofs. As I read, I have a right to judge; as I am injured, I have a right to complain; and these privileges, which I have purchased at so dear a rate, I shall not easily be persuaded to resign.

To read has, indeed, never been my business, but as there are hours of leisure in the most active life, I have passed the superfluities of time, which the diversions of the town left upon my hands, in turning over a large collection of tragedies and romances, where, amongst other sentiments, common to all authors of this class, I have found almost every page filled with the charms and happiness of a country life; that life to which every statesman in the highest elevation of his prosperity is contriving to retire; that life to which every tragic heroine in some scene or other wishes to have been born, and which is represented as a certain refuge from folly, from anxiety, from passion, and from guilt.

It was impossible to read so many passionate exclamations, and soothing descriptions, without feeling some desire to enjoy the state in which all this felicity was to be enjoyed: and therefore I received with raptures the invitation of my good aunt, and expected that by some unknown influence I should find all hopes and fears, jealousies and competitions, vanish from my heart upon my first arrival at the seats of innocence and tranquillity; that I should sleep in halcyon bowers, and wander in elysian gardens, where I should meet with nothing but the softness of benevolence, the candour of simplicity, and the cheerfulness of content: where I should see reason exerting her sovereignty over life, without any interruption from envy, avarice, or ambition, and every day passing in such a manner as the severest wisdom should approve.

This, Mr. Rambler, I tell you, I expected, and this I had by an hundred authors been taught to expect. By this expectation I was led hither, and here I live in perpetual uneasiness, without any other comfort than that of hoping to return to London.

Having, since I wrote my former letter, been driven, by the mere necessity of escaping from absolute inactivity, to make myself more acquainted with the affairs and inhabitants of this place, I am now no longer an absolute stranger to rural conversation and employments, but am far from discovering in them more innocence or wisdom, than in the sentiments or conduct of those with whom I have passed more cheerful and more fashionable hours.

It is common to reproach the tea-table, and the park, with giving opportunities and encouragement to scandal. I cannot wholly clear them from the charge; but must, however,

observe in favour of the modish prattlers, that, if not by principle, we are at least by accident, less guilty of defamation than the country ladies. For having greater numbers to observe and censure, we are commonly content to charge them only with their own faults or follies, and seldom give way to malevolence, but such as arise from some injury or affront, real or imaginary, offered to ourselves. But in these distant provinces, where the same families inhabit the same houses from age to age, they transmit and recount the faults of a whole succession. I have been informed how every estate in the neighbourhood was originally got, and find, if I may credit the accounts given me, that there is not a single acre in the hands of the right owner. I have been told of intrigues between beaux and toasts that have been now three centuries in their quiet graves, and am often entertained with traditional scandal on persons of whose names there would have been no remembrance, had they not committed somewhat that might disgrace their descendants.

In one of my visits I happened to commend the air and dignity of a young lady, who had just left the company: upon which two grave matrons looked with great slyness at each other, and the elder asked me whether I had ever seen the picture of Henry the Eighth. You may imagine that I did not immediately perceive the propriety of the question: but after having waited awhile for information, I was told that the lady's grandmother had a great-great-grandmother that was an attendant on Anna Bullen, and supposed to have been too much a favourite of the king.

If once there happens a quarrel between the principal persons of two families, the malignity is continued without end, and it is common for old maids to fall out about some election, in which their grandfathers were competitors; the heartburnings of the civil war are not yet extinguished; there are two families in the neighbourhood who have destroyed each other's game from the time of Philip and Mary; and when an account came of an inundation, which had injured the plantations of a worthy gentleman, one of the hearers remarked with exultation, that he might now have some notion of the ravages committed by his ancestors in their retreat from Bosworth.

Thus malice and hatred descend here with an inheritance, and it is necessary to be well versed in history, that the various factions of this country may be understood. You cannot expect to be on good terms with families who are resolved to love nothing in common; and, in selecting your intimates, you are perhaps to consider which party you most favour in

the barons' wars. I have often lost the good opinion of my aunt's visitants by confounding the interests of York and Lancaster, and was once censured for sitting silent when William Rufus was called a tyrant. I have, however, now thrown aside all pretensions to circumspection, for I find it impossible in less than seven years to learn all the requisite cautions. At London, if you know your company, and their parents, you are safe; but you are here suspected of alluding to the slips of great-grandmothers, and of reviving contests which were decided in armour by the redoubted knights of ancient times. I hope, therefore, that you will not condemn my impatience, if I am weary of attending where nothing can be learned, and of quarrelling where there is nothing to contest, and that you will contribute to divert me while I stay here by some facetious performance.

I am, Sir,
EUPHELIA.

No. 47. TUESDAY, August 28, 1750.

Quanquam his solatiis acquiescam, debilitor et frangor eadem illa humanitate quæ me, ut hoc ipsum permitterem, induxit. Non ideo tamen velim durior fieri: nec ignoro alios hujusmodi casus nihil amplius vocare quam damnum; eoque sibi magnos homines et sapientes videri. Qui an magni sapienteque sint, nescio: homines non sunt. Hominis est enim affici dolore, sentire; resistere tamen, et solatia admittere; non solatiis non egere. PLIN.

These proceedings have afforded me some comfort in my distress; notwithstanding which, I am still dispirited and unhinged by the same motives of humanity that induced me to grant such indulgences. However, I by no means wish to become less susceptible of tenderness. I know these kind of misfortunes would be estimated by other persons only as common losses, and from such sensations they would conceive themselves great and wise men. I shall not determine either their greatness or their wisdom; but I am certain they have no humanity. It is the part of a man to be affected with grief; to feel sorrow, at the same time that he is to resist it, and to admit of comfort. Earl of ORRERY.

OF the passions with which the mind of man is agitated, it may be observed, that they naturally hasten towards their own extinction, by inciting and quickening the attainment of their objects. Thus fear urges our flight, and desire animates our progress; and if there are some which perhaps may be indulged till they outgrow the good appropriated to their satisfaction, as it is frequently observed of avarice and ambition, yet their immediate tendency is to some means of happiness really existing, and generally within the prospect.

The miser always imagines that there is a certain sum that will fill his heart to the brim; and every ambitious man, like king Pyrrhus, has an acquisition in his thoughts that is to terminate his labours, after which he shall pass the rest of his life in ease or gaiety, in repose or devotion.

Sorrow is perhaps the only affection of the breast that can be excepted from this general remark, and it therefore deserves the particular attention of those who have assumed the arduous province of preserving the balance of the mental constitution. The other passions are diseases indeed, but they necessarily direct us to their proper cure. A man at once feels the pain and knows the medicine, to which he is carried with greater haste as the evil which requires it is more excruciating, and cures himself by unerring instinct, as the wounded stags of Crete, are related by Ælian to have recourse to vulnerary herbs. But for sorrow there is no remedy provided by nature; it is often occasioned by accidents irreparable, and dwells upon objects that have lost or changed their existence; it requires what it cannot hope, that the laws of the universe should be repealed; that the dead should return, or the past should be recalled.

Sorrow is not that regret for negligence or errour which may animate us to future care or activity, or that repentance of crimes for which, however irrevocable, our Creator has promised to accept it as an atonement: the pain which arises from these causes has very salutary effects, and is every hour extenuating itself by the reparation of those miscarriages that produce it. Sorrow is properly that state of the mind in which our desires are fixed upon the past, without looking forward to the future, an incessant wish that something were otherwise than it has been, a tormenting and harassing want of some enjoyment or possession which we have lost, and which no endeavours can possibly regain. Into such anguish many have sunk upon some sudden diminution of their fortune, an unexpected blast of their reputation, or the loss of children or of friends. They have suffered all sensibility of pleasure to be destroyed by a single blow, have given up for ever the hopes of substituting any other object in the room of that which they lament, resigned their lives to gloom and despondency, and worn themselves out in unavailing misery.

Yet so much is this passion the natural consequence of tenderness and endearment, that, however painful and however useless, it is justly reproachful not to feel it on some occasions; and so widely and constantly has it always prevailed, that the laws of some nations, and the customs of others, have limited a time for the external appearances of grief

caused by the dissolution of close alliances, and the breach of domestic union.

It seems determined by the general suffrage of mankind, that sorrow is to a certain point laudable, as the offspring of love, or at least pardonable, as the effect of weakness; but that it ought not to be suffered to increase by indulgence, but must give way, after a stated time, to social duties, and the common avocations of life. It is at first unavoidable, and therefore must be allowed, whether with or without our choice; it may afterwards be admitted as a decent and affectionate testimony of kindness and esteem; something will be extorted by nature, and something may be given to the world. But all beyond the bursts of passion, or the forms of solemnity, is not only useless, but culpable; for we have no right to sacrifice to the vain longings of affection, that time which Providence allows us for the task of our station.

Yet it too often happens that sorrow, thus lawfully entering, gains such a firm possession of the mind, that it is not afterwards to be ejected; the mournful ideas, first violently impressed and afterwards willingly received, so much engross the attention, as to predominate in every thought, to darken gaiety, and perplex ratiocination. An habitual sadness seizes upon the soul, and the faculties are chained to a single object, which can never be contemplated but with hopeless uneasiness.

From this state of dejection it is very difficult to rise to cheerfulness and alacrity: and therefore many who have laid down rules of intellectual health, think preservatives easier than remedies, and teach us not to trust ourselves with favourite enjoyments, not to indulge the luxury of fondness, but to keep our minds always suspended in such indifference, that we may change the objects about us without emotion.

An exact compliance with this rule might, perhaps, contribute to tranquillity, but surely it would never produce happiness. He that regards none so much as to be afraid of losing them, must live for ever without the gentle pleasures of sympathy and confidence; he must feel no melting fondness, no warmth of benevolence, nor any of those honest joys which nature annexes to the power of pleasing. And as no man can justly claim more tenderness than he pays, he must forfeit his share in that officious and watchful kindness which love only can dictate, and those lenient endearments by which love only can soften life. He may justly be overlooked and neglected by such as have more warmth in their hearts; for who would be the friend of him, whom, with whatever assiduity he may be courted, and with whatever services obliged,

his principles will not suffer to make equal returns, and who, when you have exhausted all the instances of good-will, can only be prevailed on not to be an enemy.

An attempt to preserve life in a state of neutrality and indifference is unreasonable and vain. If by excluding joy we could shut out grief, the scheme would deserve very serious attention; but since, however we may debar ourselves from happiness, misery will find its way at many inlets, and the assaults of pain will force our regard, though we may withhold it from the invitations of pleasure, we may surely endeavour to raise life above the middle point of apathy at one time, since it will necessarily sink below it at another.

But though it cannot be reasonable not to gain happiness for fear of losing it, yet it must be confessed, that in proportion to the pleasure of possession, will be for some time our sorrow for the loss; it is therefore the province of the moralist to inquire whether such pains may not quickly give way to mitigation. Some have thought that the most certain way to clear the heart from its embarrassment is to drag it by force into scenes of merriment. Others imagine, that such a transition is too violent, and recommend rather to sooth it into tranquillity, by making it acquainted with miseries more dreadful and afflictive, and diverting to the calamities of others the regards which we are inclined to fix too closely upon our own misfortunes.

It may be doubted whether either of those remedies will be sufficiently powerful. The efficacy of mirth is not always easy to try, and the indulgence of melancholy may be suspected to be one of those medicines, which will destroy, if it happens not to cure.

The safe and general antidote against sorrow is employment. It is commonly observed, that among soldiers and seamen, though there is much kindness, there is little grief: they see their friend fall without any of that lamentation which is indulged in security and idleness, because they have no leisure to spare from the care of themselves; and whoever shall keep his thoughts equally busy, will find himself equally unaffected with irretrievable losses.

Time is observed generally to wear out sorrow, and its effects might doubtless be accelerated by quickening the succession and enlarging the variety of objects.

——Si tempore longo
Leniri poterit luctus, tu sperne morari,
Qui sapiet sibi tempus erit.—— GROTIUS

'Tis long ere time can mitigate your grief;
To wisdom fly, she quickly brings relief. F. LEWIS.

Sorrow is a kind of rust of the soul, which every new idea contributes in its passage to scour away. It is the putrefaction of stagnant life and is remedied by exercise and motion.

No. 48. Saturday, September 1, 1750.

Non est vivere, sed valere, vita. Mart.

For life is not to live, but to be well. Elphinston.

Among the innumerable follies, by which we lay up in our youth repentance and remorse for the succeeding part of our lives, there is scarce any against which warnings are of less efficacy than the neglect of health. When the springs of motion are yet elastic, when the heart bounds with vigour, and the eye sparkles with spirit, it is with difficulty that we are taught to conceive the imbecility that every hour is bringing upon us, or to imagine that the nerves which are now braced with so much strength, and the limbs which play with so much activity, will lose all their power under the gripe of time, relax with numbness, and totter with debility.

To the arguments which have been used against complaints under the miseries of life, the philosophers have, I think, forgot to add the incredulity of those to whom we recount our sufferings. But if the purpose of lamentation be to excite pity, it is surely superfluous for age and weakness to tell their plaintive stories; for pity presupposes sympathy, and a little attention will show them, that those who do not feel pain, seldom think that it is felt; and a short recollection will inform almost every man, that he is only repaid the insult which he has given, since he may remember how often he has mocked infirmity, laughed at its cautions, and censured its impatience.

The valetudinarian race have made the care of health ridiculous by suffering it to prevail over all other considerations, as the miser has brought frugality into contempt, by permitting the love of money not to share, but to engross his mind: they both err alike, by confounding the means with the end; they grasp at health only to be well, as at money only to be rich; and forget that every terrestrial advantage is chiefly valuable, as it furnishes abilities for the exercise of virtue.

Health is indeed so necessary to all the duties, as well as

pleasures of life, that the crime of squandering it is equal to the folly; and he that for a short gratification brings weakness and diseases upon himself, and for the pleasure of a few years passed in the tumults of diversion, and clamours of merriment, condemns the maturer and more experienced part of his life to the chamber and the couch, may be justly reproached, not only as a spendthrift of his own happiness, but as a robber of the public; as a wretch that has voluntarily disqualified himself for the business of his station, and refused that part which Providence assigns him in the general task of human nature.

There are perhaps very few conditions more to be pitied than that of an active and elevated mind, labouring under the weight of a distempered body. The time of such a man is always spent in forming schemes, which a change of wind hinders him from executing; his powers fume away in projects and in hope, and the day of action never arrives. He lies down delighted with the thoughts of to-morrow, pleases his ambition with the fame he shall acquire, or his benevolence with the good he shall confer. But in the night the skies are overcast, the temper of the air is changed, he wakes in languor, impatience, and distraction, and has no longer any wish but for ease, nor any attention but to misery. It may be said that disease generally begins that equality which death completes; the distinctions which set one man so much above another are very little perceived in the gloom of a sick chamber, where it will be vain to expect entertainment from the gay, or instruction from the wise; where all human glory is obliterated, the wit is clouded, the reasoner perplexed, and the hero subdued; where the highest and brightest of mortal beings finds nothing left him but the consciousness of innocence.

There is among the fragments of the Greek poets a short hymn to Health, in which her power of exalting the happiness of life, of heightening the gifts of fortune, and adding enjoyment to possession, is inculcated with so much force and beauty, that no one, who has ever languished under the discomforts and infirmities of a lingering disease, can read it without feeling the images dance in his heart, and adding from his own experience new vigour to the wish, and from his own imagination new colours to the picture. The particular occasion of this little composition is not known, but it is probable that the author had been sick, and in the first raptures of returning vigour, addressed Health in the following manner:

Υγιεια πρεσβιστα Μακάρων,
Μετὰ σου ναίοιμι
Το λειπόμενον βιοτᾶς·
Σὺ δέ μοι πρόφρων σύνοικος εἴης
Ἐι γαρ τις η πλουτου χάρις η τεκέων,
Τᾶς εὐδαίμονός τ' ἀνθρώποις
Βασιληίδος ἀρχᾶς, η ποθων,
Ὀυς κρυφίοις Αφροδιτης αρκυσιν θηρεύομεν,
Ἦ εἴ τις ἄλλα θεόθεν ἀνθρώποις τέρψις,
Ἢ πόνων ἀμπνοὰ πέφανται·
Μετὰ σεῖο μάκαιρα Ὑγίεια,
Τέθηλε πάντα, καὶ λάμπει χαρίτων ἔαρ·
Σέθεν δὲ χωρὶς, οὐδεὶς εὐδαίμων πέλει.

Health, most venerable of the powers of heaven! with thee may the remaining part of my life be passed, nor do thou refuse to bless me with thy residence. For whatever there is of pleasure in wealth, in descendants, or in sovereign command, the highest summit of human enjoyment, or in those objects of desire which we endeavour to chase into the toils of love; whatever delight, or whatever solace is granted by the celestials, to soften our fatigues, in thy presence, thou parent of happiness, all those joys spread out and flourish; in thy presence blooms the spring of pleasure, and without thee no man is happy.

Such is the power of health, that without its co-operation every other comfort is torpid and lifeless, as the powers of vegetation without the sun. And yet this bliss is commonly thrown away in thoughtless negligence, or in foolish experiments on our own strength; we let it perish without remembering its value, or waste it to show how much we have to spare; it is sometimes given up to the management of levity and chance, and sometimes sold for the applause of jollity and debauchery.

Health is equally neglected, and with equal impropriety, by the votaries of business and the followers of pleasure. Some men ruin the fabric of their bodies by incessant revels, and others by intemperate studies; some batter it by excess, and others sap it by inactivity. To the noisy route of bacchanalian rioters, it will be to little purpose that advice is offered, though it requires no great abilities to prove, that he loses pleasure who loses health; their clamors are too loud for the whispers of caution, and they run the course of life with too much precipitance to stop at the call of wisdom. Nor perhaps will they that are busied in adding thousands to thousands, pay much regard to him that shall direct them to hasten more slowly to their wishes. Yet since lovers of money are generally cool, deliberate, and thoughtful, they might surely consider, that the greater good ought not to be sacrificed to the less. Health is certainly more valuable than money, because it is by health that money is procured; but

thousands and millions are of small avail to alleviate the protracted tortures of the gout, to repair the broken organs of sense, or resuscitate the powers of digestion. Poverty is indeed an evil, from which we naturally fly; but let us not run from one enemy to another, nor take shelter in the arms of sickness.

> ——*Projecere animam! quam vellent æthere in alto*
> *Nunc et pauperiem, et duros tolerare labores!*
>
> For healthful indigence in vain they pray,
> In quest of wealth who throw their lives away.

Those who lose their health in an irregular and impetuous pursuit of literary accomplishments are yet less to be excused; for they ought to know that the body is not forced beyond its strength, but with the loss of more vigour than is proportionate to the effect produced. Whoever takes up life beforehand, by depriving himself of rest and refreshment, must not only pay back the hours, but pay them back with usury: and for the gain of a few months but half enjoyed, must give up years to the listlessness of languor, and the implacability of pain. They whose endeavour is mental excellence, will learn, perhaps too late, how much it is endangered by diseases of the body, and find that knowledge may easily be lost in the starts of melancholy, the flights of impatience, and the peevishness of decrepitude.

No. 49. Tuesday, September 4, 1750.

> *Non omnis moriar, multaque pars mei*
> *Vitabit Libitinam, usque ego postera*
> *Crescam laude recens.* Hor.
>
> Whole *Horace* shall not die; his songs shall save
> The greatest portion from the greedy grave. Creech.

The first motives of human actions are those appetites which Providence has given to man in common with the rest of the inhabitants of the earth. Immediately after our birth, thirst and hunger incline us to the breast, which we draw by instinct, like other young creatures, and when we are satisfied, we express our uneasiness by importunate and incessant cries, till we have obtained a place or posture proper for repose.

The next call that rouses us from a state of inactivity, is that of our passions; we quickly begin to be sensible of hope and fear, love and hatred, desire and aversion; these arising from the power of comparison and reflection, extend their range wider, as our reason strengthens, and our knowledge enlarges. At first we have no thought of pain, but when we actually feel it; we afterwards begin to fear it, yet not before it approaches us very nearly; but by degrees we discover it at a greater distance, and find it lurking in remote consequences. Our terrour in time improves into caution, and we learn to look round with vigilance and solicitude, to stop all the avenues at which misery can enter, and to perform or endure many things in themselves toilsome and unpleasing, because we know by reason, or by experience, that our labour will be overbalanced by the reward, that it will either procure some positive good, or avert some evil greater than itself.

But as the soul advances to a fuller exercise of its powers, the animal appetites, and the passions immediately arising from them, are not sufficient to find it employment: the wants of nature are soon supplied, the fear of their return is easily precluded, and something more is necessary to relieve the long intervals of inactivity, and to give those faculties, which cannot lie wholly quiescent, some particular direction. For this reason, new desires and artificial passions are by degrees produced; and, from having wishes only in consequence of our wants, we begin to feel wants in consequence of our wishes; we persuade ourselves to set a value upon things which are of no use but because we have agreed to value them; things which can neither satisfy hunger, nor mitigate pain, nor secure us from any real calamity, and which, therefore, we find of no esteem among those nations whose artless and barbarous manners keep them always anxious for the necessaries of life.

This is the original of avarice, vanity, ambition, and generally of all those desires which arise from the comparison of our condition with that of others. He that thinks himself poor because his neighbour is richer; he that, like Cæsar, would rather be the first man of a village, than the second in the capital of the world, has apparently kindled in himself desires which he never received from nature, and acts upon principles established only by the authority of custom.

Of those adscititious passions, some, as avarice and envy, are universally condemned; some, as friendship and curiosity, generally praised; but there are others about which the

suffrages of the wise are divided, and of which it is doubted, whether they tend most to promote the happiness or increase the miseries of mankind.

Of this ambiguous and disputable kind is the love of fame, a desire of filling the minds of others with admiration, and of being celebrated by generations to come with praises which we shall not hear. This ardour has been considered by some, as nothing better than splendid madness, as a flame kindled by pride, and fanned by folly; for what, say they, can be more remote from wisdom, than to direct all our actions by the hope of that which is not to exist till we ourselves are in the grave? To pant after that which can never be possessed, and of which the value thus wildly put upon it, arises from this particular condition, that during life it is not to be obtained? To gain the favour, and hear the applauses of our contemporaries, is indeed equally desirable with any other prerogative of superiority, because fame may be of use to smooth the paths of life, to terrify opposition, and fortify tranquillity; but to what end shall we be the darlings of mankind, when we can no longer receive any benefits from their favour? It is more reasonable to wish for reputation, while it may yet be enjoyed, as Anacreon calls upon his companions to give him for present use the wine and garlands which they purpose to bestow upon his tomb.

The advocates for the love of fame allege in its vindication, that it is a passion natural and universal: a flame lighted by Heaven, and always burning with greatest vigour in the most enlarged and elevated minds. That the desire of being praised by posterity implies a resolution to deserve their praises, and that the folly charged upon it, is only a noble and disinterested generosity, which is not felt, and therefore not understood, by those who have been always accustomed to refer every thing to themselves, and whose selfishness has contracted their understandings. That the soul of man, formed for eternal life, naturally springs forward beyond the limits of corporeal existence, and rejoices to consider herself as co-operating with future ages, and as co-extended with endless duration. That the reproach urged with so much petulance, the reproach of labouring for what cannot be enjoyed, is founded on an opinion which may with great probability be doubted; for since we suppose the powers of the soul to be enlarged by its separation, why should we conclude that its knowledge of sublunary transactions is contracted or extinguished.

Upon an attentive and impartial review of the argument, it will appear that the love of fame is to be regulated rather

than extinguished; and that men should be taught not to be wholly careless about their memory, but to endeavour that they may be remembered chiefly for their virtues, since no other reputation will be able to transmit any pleasure beyond the grave.

It is evident that fame, considered merely as the immortality of a name, is not less likely to be the reward of bad actions than of good; he therefore has no certain principle for the regulation of his conduct, whose single aim is not to be forgotten. And history will inform us, that this blind and undistinguishing appetite of renown has always been uncertain in its effects, and directed by accident or opportunity, indifferently to the benefit or devastation of the world. When Themistocles complained that the trophies of Miltiades hindered him from sleep, he was animated by them to perform the same services in the same cause. But Cæsar, when he wept at the sight of Alexander's picture, having no honest opportunities of action, let his ambition break out to the ruin of his country.

If, therefore, the love of fame is so far indulged by the mind as to become independent and predominant, it is dangerous and irregular; but it may be usefully employed as an inferior and secondary motive, and will serve sometimes to revive our activity, when we begin to languish and lose sight of that more certain, more valuable, and more durable reward, which ought always to be our first hope and our last. But it must be strongly impressed upon our minds that virtue is not to be pursued as one of the means to fame, but fame to be accepted as the only recompense which mortals can bestow on virtue; to be accepted with complacence, but not sought with eagerness. Simply to be remembered is no advantage; it is a privilege which satire as well as panegyric can confer, and is not more enjoyed by Titus or Constantine, than by Timocreon of Rhodes, of whom we only know from his epitaph, *that he had eaten many a meal, drank many a flaggon, and uttered many a reproach.*

> Πολλὰ φαγὼν, καὶ πολλὰ πιὼν, καὶ πολλὰ κακ' εἰπὼν
> Ἀνθρωπος, κεῖμαι Τιμοκρέων Ῥόδιος.

The true satisfaction which is to be drawn from the consciousness that we shall share the attention of future times, must arise from the hope, that with our name, our virtues will be propagated; and that those whom we cannot benefit in our lives, may receive instruction from our examples, and incitement from our renown.

No. 50. Saturday, September 8, 1750.

Credebant hoc grande nefas et morte piandum,
Si juvenis vetulo non assurrexerat, atque
Barbato cuicunque puer, licet ipse videret
Plura domi fraga, et majores glandis acervos. Juv.

And had not men the hoary head rever'd,
And boys paid rev'rence when a man appear'd,
Both must have died, though richer skins they wore,
And saw more heaps of acrons in their store. Creech.

I have always thought it the business of those who turn their speculations upon the living world, to commend their virtues, as well as to expose the faults of their contemporaries, and to confute a false as well as to support a just accusation; not only because it is peculiarly the business of a monitor to keep his own reputation untainted, lest those who can once charge him with partiality, should indulge themselves afterwards in disbelieving him at pleasure; but because he may find real crimes sufficient to give full employment to caution or repentance, without distracting the mind by needless scruples and vain solicitudes.

There are certain fixed and stated reproaches that one part of mankind has in all ages thrown upon another, which are regularly transmitted through continued successions, and which he that has once suffered them is certain to use with the same undistinguishing vehemence, when he has changed his station, and gained the prescriptive right of inflicting on others what he had formerly endured himself.

To these hereditary imputations, of which no man sees the justice till it becomes his interest to see it, very little regard is to be shown; since it does not appear that they are produced by ratiocination or inquiry, but received implicitly, or caught by a kind of instantaneous contagion, and supported rather by willingness to credit, than ability to prove them.

It has been always the practice of those who are desirous to believe themselves made venerable by length of time, to censure the new comers into life, for want of respect to grey hairs and sage experience, for heady confidence in their own understandings, for hasty conclusions upon partial views, for disregard of counsels, which their fathers and grandsires are ready to afford them, and a rebellious impatience of that subordination to which youth is condemned by nature, as necessary to its security from evils into which it would be otherwise precipitated, by the rashness of passion, and the blindness of ignorance.

Every old man complains of the growing depravity of the orld, of the petulance and insolence of the rising generation. e recounts the decency and regularity of former times, and lebrates the discipline and sobriety of the age in which his uth was passed, a happy age, which is now no more to be pected, since confusion has broken in upon the world, and rown down all the boundaries of civility and reverence.

It is not sufficiently considered how much he assumes who ires to claim the privilege of complaining; for as every man is, in his own opinion, a full share of the miseries of life, is inclined to consider all clamorous uneasiness as a proof impatience rather than of affliction, and to ask, What merit is this man to show, by which he has acquired a right to pine at the distributions of nature? Or, why does he imane that exemptions should be granted him from the general ndition of man? We find ourselves excited rather to capousness than pity, and instead of being in haste to sooth his mplaints by sympathy and tenderness, we inquire, whether e pain be proportionate to the lamentation; and whether, pposing the affliction real, it is not the effect of vice and lly, rather than calamity.

The querulousness and indignation which is observed so ten to disfigure the last scene of life, naturally leads us to quiries like these. For surely it will be thought at the first iew of things, that if age be thus condemned and ridiculed, isulted and neglected, the crime must at least be equal on ther part. They who have had opportunities of establishg their authority over minds ductile and unresisting, they ho have been the protectors of helplessness, and the instruc rs of ignorance, and who yet retain in their own hands the ower of wealth, and the dignity of command, must defea ieir influence by their own misconduct, and make use of ab iese advantages with very little skill, if they cannot secure themselves an appearance of respect, and ward off open ockery, and declared contempt.

The general story of mankind will evince, that lawful and ettled authority is very seldom resisted when it is well emloyed. Gross corruption, or evident imbecility, is necessary the suppression of that reverence with which the majority f mankind look upon their governors, and on those whom iey see surrounded by splendour, and fortified by power. 'or though men are drawn by their passions into forgetfulness of invisible rewards and punishments, yet they are easily ept obedient to those who have temporal dominion in their ands, till their veneration is dissipated by such wickedness nd folly as can neither be defended nor concealed.

It may, therefore, very reasonably be suspected, that the old draw upon themselves the greatest part of those insults which they so much lament, and that age is rarely despised but when it is contemptible. If men imagine that excess of debauchery can be made reverend by time, that knowledge is the consequence of long life, however idly or thoughtlessly employed, that priority of birth will supply the want of steadiness or honesty, can it raise much wonder that their hopes are disappointed, and that they see their posterity rather willing to trust their own eyes in their progress into life, than enlist themselves under guides who have lost their way?

There are, indeed, many truths which time necessarily and certainly teaches, and which might, by those who have learned them from experience, be communicated to their successors at a cheaper rate: but dictates, though liberally enough bestowed, are generally without effect, the teacher gains few proselytes by instruction, which his own behaviour contradicts; and young men miss the benefit of counsel, because they are not very ready to believe that those who fall below them in practice, can much excel them in theory. Thus the progress of knowledge is retarded, the world is kept long in the same state, and every new race is to gain the prudence of their predecessors by committing and redressing the same miscarriages.

To secure to the old that influence which they are willing to claim, and which might so much contribute to the improvement of the arts of life, it is absolutely necessary that they give themselves up to the duties of declining years; and contentedly resign to youth its levity, its pleasures, its frolics, and its fopperies. It is a hopeless endeavour to unite the contrarieties of spring and winter; it is unjust to claim the privileges of age, and retain the playthings of childhood. The young always form magnificent ideas of the wisdom and gravity of men, whom they consider as placed at a distance from them in the ranks of existence, and naturally look on those whom they find trifling with long beards, with contempt and indignation, like that which women feel at the effeminacy of men. If dotards will contend with boys in those performances in which boys must always excel them; if they will dress crippled limbs in embroidery, endeavour at gaiety with faultering voices, and darken assemblies of pleasure with the ghastliness of disease, they may well expect those who find their diversions obstructed will hoot them away; and that if they descend to competition with youth, they must bear the insolence of successful rivals.

Lusisti satis, edisti satis, atque bibisti:
Tempus abire tibi est.

You've had your share of mirth, of meat and drink;
'Tis time to quit the scene—'tis time to think. ELPHINSTON.

Another vice of age, by which the rising generation may be alienated from it, is severity and censoriousness, that gives no allowance to the failings of early life, that expects artfulness from childhood, and constancy from youth, that is peremptory in every command, and inexorable to every failure. There are many who live merely to hinder happiness, and whose descendants can only tell of long life, that it produces suspicion, malignity, peevishness, and persecution: and yet even these tyrants can talk of the ingratitude of the age, curse their heirs for impatience, and wonder that young men cannot take pleasure in their fathers' company.

He that would pass the latter part of life with honour and decency, must, when he is young, consider that he shall one day be old: and remember, when he is old, that he has once been young. In youth, he must lay up knowledge for his support, when his powers of acting shall forsake him; and in age forbear to animadvert with rigour on faults which experience only can correct.

No. 51. TUESDAY, September 11, 1750.

——Stultus labor est ineptiarum. MART.

How foolish is the toil of trifling cares! ELPHINSTON.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR—As you have allowed a place in your paper to Euphelia's letters from the country, and appear to think no form of human life unworthy of your attention, I have resolved, after many struggles with idleness and diffidence, to give you some account of my entertainment in this sober season of universal retreat, and to describe to you the employments of those who look with contempt on the pleasures and diversions of polite life, and employ all their powers of censure and invective upon the uselessness, vanity, and folly, of dress, visits, and conversation.

When a tiresome and vexatious journey of four days had

brought me to the house, where invitation, regularly sent for seven years together, had at last induced me to pass the summer, I was surprised, after the civilities of my first reception, to find, instead of the leisure and tranquillity, which a rural life always promises, and, if well conducted, might always afford, a confused wildness of care, and a tumultuous hurry of diligence, by which every face was clouded, and every motion agitated. The old lady, who was my father's relation, was, indeed, very full of the happiness which she received from my visit, and according to the forms of obsolete breeding, insisted, that I should recompense the long delay of my company with a promise not to leave her till winter. But, amidst all her kindness and caresses, she very frequently turned her head aside, and whispered, with anxious earnestness, some order to her daughters, which never failed to send them out with unpolite precipitation. Sometimes her impatience would not suffer her to stay behind; she begged my pardon, she must leave me for a moment; she went, and returned, and sat down again, but was again disturbed by some new care, dismissed her daughters with the same trepidation, and followed them with the same countenance of business and solicitude.

However I was alarmed at this show of eagerness and disturbance, and however my curiosity was excited by such busy preparations as naturally promised some great event, I was yet too much a stranger to gratify myself with inquiries; but finding none of the family in mourning, I pleased myself with imagining that I should rather see a wedding than a funeral.

At last we sat down to supper, when I was informed that one of the young ladies, after whom I thought myself bound to inquire, was under a necessity of attending some affair that could not be neglected: Soon afterward my relation began to talk of the regularity of her family, and the inconvenience of London hours; and at last let me know that they had purposed that night to go to bed sooner than was usual, because they were to rise early in the morning to make cheesecakes. This hint sent me to my chamber, to which I was accompanied by all the ladies, who begged me to excuse some large sieves of leaves and flowers that covered two-thirds of the floor, for they intended to distil them when they were dry, and they had no other room that so conveniently received the rising sun.

The scent of the plants hindered me from rest, and therefore I rose early in the morning with a resolution to explore my new habitation. I stole unperceived by my busy cousins into the garden, where I found nothing either more great or

elegant, than in the same number of acres cultivated for the market. Of the gardener I soon learned that his lady was the greatest manager in that part of the country, and that I was come hither at the time in which I might learn to make more pickles and conserves, than could be seen at any other house a hundred miles round.

It was not long before her ladyship gave me sufficient opportunities of knowing her character, for she was too much pleased with her own accomplishments to conceal them, and took occasion, from some sweet-meats which she set next day upon the table, to discourse for two long hours upon robs and gellies; laid down the best methods of conserving, reserving, and preserving all sorts of fruit; told us with great contempt of the London lady in the neighbourhood, by whom these terms were very often confounded; and hinted how much she should be ashamed to set before company, at her own house, sweetmeats of so dark a colour as she had often seen at mistress Sprightly's.

It is, indeed, the great business of her life, to watch the skillet on the fire, to see it simmer with the due degree of heat, and to snatch it off at the moment of projection; and the employments to which she has bred her daughters, are to turn rose-leaves in the shade, to pick out the seeds of currants with a quill, to gather fruit without bruising it, and to extract bean-flower water for the skin. Such are the tasks with which, every day, since I came hither, has begun and ended, to which the early hours of life are sacrificed, and in which that time is passing away which never shall return.

But to reason or expostulate are hopeless attempts. The lady has settled her opinions, and maintains the dignity of her own performances with all the firmness of stupidity accustomed to be flattered. Her daughters having never seen any house but their own, believe their mother's excellence on her own word. Her husband is a mere sportsman, who is pleased to see his table well furnished, and thinks the day sufficiently successful, in which he brings home a leash of hares to be potted by his wife.

After a few days I pretended to want books, but my lady soon told me that none of her books would suit my taste: for her part she never loved to see young women give their minds to such follies, by which they would only learn to use hard words; she bred up her daughters to understand a house, and whoever should marry them, if they knew any thing of good cookery, would never repent it.

There are, however, some things in the culinary sciences too sublime for youthful intellects, mysteries into which they

must not be initiated till the years of serious maturity, and which are referred to the day of marriage, as the supreme qualification for connubial life. She makes an orange pudding, which is the envy of all the neighbourhood, and which she has hitherto found means of mixing and baking with such secrecy, that the ingredient to which it owes its flavour has never been discovered. She, indeed, conducts this great affair with all the caution that human policy can suggest. It is never known beforehand when this pudding will be produced; she takes the ingredients privately into her own closet, employs her maids and daughters in different parts of the house, orders the oven to be heated for a pie, and places the pudding in it with her own hands, the mouth of the oven is then stopped, and all inquiries are vain.

The composition of the pudding she has, however, promised Clarinda, that if she pleases her in maraiage, she shall be told without reserve. But the art of making English capers she has not yet persuaded herself to discover, but seems resolved that secret shall perish with her, as some alchymists have obstinately suppressed the art of transmuting metals.

I once ventured to lay my fingers on her book of receipts, which she left upon the table, having intelligence that a vessel of gooseberry wine had burst the hoops. But though the importance of the event sufficiently engrossed her care, to prevent any recollection of the danger to which her secrets were exposed, I was not able to make use of the golden moments; for this treasure of hereditary knowledge was so well concealed by the manner of spelling used by her grandmother, her mother, and herself, that I was totally unable to understand it, and lost the opportunity of consulting the oracle, for want of knowing the language in which its answers were returned.

It is, indeed, necessary, if I have any regard to her ladyship's esteem, that I should apply myself to some of these economical accomplishments; for I overheard her, two days ago, warning her daughters, by my mournful example, against negligence of pastry, and ignorance in carving: for you saw, said she, that, with all her pretensions to knowledge, she turned the partridge the wrong way when she attempted to cut it, and, I believe, scarcely knows the difference between paste raised, and paste in a dish.

The reason, Mr. Rambler, why I have laid Lady Bustle's character before you, is a desire to be informed whether, in your opinion, it is worthy of imitation, and whether I shall throw away the books which I have hitherto thought it my duty to read, for the Lady's Closet Opened, the Complete Servant Maid, and the Court Cook, and resign all curiosity after

right and wrong, for the art of scalding damascenes, without bursting them, and preserving the whiteness of pickled mushrooms.

Lady Bustle has, indeed, by this incessant application to fruits and flowers, contracted her cares into a narrow space, and set herself free from many perplexities with which other minds are disturbed. She has no curiosity after the events of a war, or the fate of heroes in distress; she can hear, without the least emotion, the ravage of a fire, or devastation of a storm; her neighbours grow rich or poor, come into the world or go out of it, without regard, while she is pressing the galley-bag, or airing the store room; but I cannot perceive that she is more free from disquiets than those whose understanding take a wider range. Her marigolds, when they are almost cured, are often scattered by the wind, and the rain sometimes falls upon fruit when it ought to be gathered dry. While her artificial wines are fermenting, her whole life is wrestlessness and anxiety. Her sweetmeats are not always bright, and the maid sometimes forgets the just proportion of salt and pepper, when venison is to be baked. Her conserves mould, her wines sour, and pickles mother; and like all the rest of mankind, she is every day mortified with the defeat of her schemes, and the disappointment of her hopes.

With regard to vice and virtue, she seems a kind of neutral being. She has no crime but luxury, nor any virtue but chastity; she has no desire to be praised but for her cookery; nor wishes any ill to the rest of mankind, but that whenever they aspire to a fesst, their custards may be wheyish, and their pie-crusts tough.

I am now very impatient to know whether I am to look on these ladies as the great patterns of our sex, and to consider conserves and pickles as the business of my life; whether the censures which I now suffer be just, and whether the brewers of wines, and the distillers of washes, have a right to look with insolence on the weakness of

CORNELIA.

No. 52. Saturday, September 15, 1750.

——Quoties flenti Theseus *heros*
Siste modum, dixit, neque enim fortuna quærenda
Sola tua est, similes aliorum respice casus,
Mitius ista feres. Ovid.

How oft in vain the son of *Theseus* said,
The stormy sorrows be with patience laid;
Nor are thy fortunes to be wept alone;
Weigh other's woes, and learn to bear thy own. Cattott.

Among the various methods of consolation, to which the miseries inseparable from our present state have given occasion it has been, as I have already remarked, recommended by some writers to put the sufferer in mind of heavier pressures, and more excruciating calamities, than those of which he has himself reason to complain.

This has, in all ages, been directed and practised; and, in conformity to this custom, Lipsius, the great modern master of the Stoic philosophy, has, in his celebrated treatise on *Steadiness of Mind*, endeavoured to fortify the breast against too much sensibility of misfortune, by enumerating the evils which have in former ages fallen upon the world, the devastation of wide-extended regions, the sack of cities, and massacre of nations. And the common voice of the multitude uninstructed by precept, and unprejudiced by authority, which, in questions that relate to the heart of man, is, in my opinion, more decisive than the learning of Lipsius, seems to justify the efficacy of this procedure; for one of the first comforts which one neighbour administers to another, is a relation of the like infelicity, combined with circumstances of greater bitterness.

But this medicine of the mind is like many remedies applied to the body, of which, though we see the effects we are unacquainted with the manner of operation, and of which, therefore, some, who are unwilling to suppose any thing out of the reach of their own sagacity, have been inclined to doubt whether they have really those virtues for which they are celebrated, and whether their reputation is not the mere gift of fancy, prejudice, and credulity.

Consolation, or comfort, are words which, in their proper acceptation, signify some alleviation of that pain to which it is not in our power to afford the proper and adequate remedy; they imply rather an augmentation of the power of bearing, than a diminution of the burthen. A prisoner is relieved by

him that sets him at liberty, but receives comfort from such as suggest considerations by which he is made patient under the inconvenience of confinement. To that grief which arises from a great loss, he only brings the true remedy who makes his friend's condition the same as before; but he may be properly termed a comforter, who by persuasion extenuates the pain of poverty, and shows in the style of *Hesiod*, that *half is more than the whole*.

It is, perhaps, not immediately obvious, how it can lull the memory of misfortune, or appease the throbbings of anguish, to hear that others are more miserable; others, perhaps, unknown or wholly indifferent, whose prosperity raises no envy, and whose fall can gratify no resentment. Some topics of comfort arising, like that which gave hope and spirit to the captive of Sesostris, from the perpetual vicissitudes of life, and mutability of humam affairs, may as properly raise the dejected as depress the proud, and have an immediate tendency to exhilarate and revive. But how can it avail the man who languishes in the gloom of sorrow, without prospect of emerging into the sunshine of cheerfulness, to hear that others are sunk yet deeper in the dungeon of misery, shackled with heavier chains, and surrounded with darker desperation?

The solace arising from this consideration seems indeed the weakest of all others, and is perhaps never properly applied, but in cases where there is no place for reflections of more speedy and pleasing efficacy. But even from such calamities life is by no means free; a thousand ills incurable, a thousand losses irreparable, a thousand difficulties insurmountable are known, or will be known, by all the sons of men. Native deformity cannot be rectified, a dead friend cannot return, and the hours of youth trifled away in folly, or lost in sickness, cannot be restored.

Under the oppression of such melancholy, it has been found useful to take a survey of the world, to contemplate the various scenes of distress in which mankind are struggling round us, and acquaint ourselves with the *terribiles visu formæ*, the various shapes of misery, which make havoc of terrestrial happiness range all corners almost without restraint, trample down our hopes at the hour of harvest, and, when we have built our schemes to the top, ruin their foundations.

The first effect of this meditation is, that it furnishes a new employment for the mind, and engages the passions on remoter objects; as kings have sometimes freed themselves from a subject too haughty to be governed, and too powerful to be crushed, by posting him in a distant province, till his popularity has subsided, or his pride been repressed. The atten-

tion is dissipated by variety, and acts more weakly upon any single part, as that torrent may be drawn off to different channels, which, pouring down in one collected body, cannot be resisted. This species of comfort is, therefore, unavailing in severe paroxysms of corporal pain, when the mind is every instant called back to misery, and in the first shock of any sudden evil; but will certainly be of use against encroaching melancholy, and a settled habit of gloomy thoughts.

It is further advantageous, as it supplies us with opportunities of making comparisons in our own favour. We know that very little of the pain, or pleasure, which does not begin and end in our senses, is otherwise than relative; we are rich or poor, great or little, in proportion to the number that excel us, or fall beneath us, in any of these respects; and therefore a man, whose uneasiness arises from reflection on any misfortune that throws him below those with whom he was once equal, is comforted by finding that he is not yet the lowest.

There is another kind of comparison, less tending towards the vice of envy, very well illustrated by an old poet,* whose system will not afford many reasonable motives to content. "It is," says he, "pleasing to look from shore upon the tumults of a storm, and to see a ship struggling with the billows; it is pleasing, not because the pain of another can give us delight, but because we have a stronger impression of the happiness of safety." Thus, when we look abroad, and behold the multitudes that are groaning under evils heavier than those which we have experienced, we shrink back to our own state, and, instead of repining that so much must be felt, learn to rejoice that we have not more to feel.

By this observation of the miseries of others, fortitude is strengthened, and the mind brought to a more extensive knowledge of her own powers. As the heroes of action catch the flame from one another, so they to whom Providence has allotted the harder task of suffering with calmness and dignity, may animate themselves by the remembrance of those evils which have been laid on others, perhaps naturally as weak as themselves, and bear up with vigour and resolution against their own oppressions, when they see it possible that more severe afflictions may be born.

There is still another reason why, to many minds, the relation of other men's infelicity may give a lasting and continual relief. Some, not well instructed in the measures by which Providence distributes happiness, are perhaps misled

* Lucretius. C.

by divines, who, as Bellarmine makes temporal prosperity one of the characters of the true church, have represented wealth and ease as the certain concomitants of virtue, and the unfailing result of the divine approbation. Such sufferers are dejected in their misfortunes, not so much for what they feel, as for what they dread; not because they cannot support the sorrows, or endure the wants, of their present condition, but because they consider them as only the beginnings of more sharp and more lasting pains. To these mourners it is an act of the highest charity to represent the calamities which not only virtue has suffered, but virtue has incurred; to inform them that one evidence of a future state, is the uncertainty of any present reward for goodness; and to remind them from the highest authority, of the distresses and penury of men *of whom the world was not worthy.*

No. 53. Tuesday, September 18, 1750.

Φείδου τῶν κτημάτων. *Epigram Vet.*

Husband thy possessions.

There is scarcely among the evils of human life any so generally dreaded as poverty. Every other species of misery, those, who are not much accustomed to disturb the present moment with reflection, can easily forget, because it is not always forced upon their regard; but it is impossible to pass a day or an hour in the confluxes of men, without seeing how much indigence is exposed to contumely, neglect, and insult; and, in its lowest state, to hunger and nakedness; to injuries against which every passion is in arms, and to wants which nature cannot sustain.

Against other evils the heart is often hardened by true or by false notions of dignity and reputation: thus we see dangers of every kind faced with willingness, because bravery in a good or bad cause is never without its encomiasts and admirers. But in the prospect of poverty, there is nothing but gloom and melancholy; the mind and body suffer together; its miseries bring no alleviations; it is a state in which every virtue is obscured, and in which no conduct can avoid reproach: a state in which cheerfulness is insensibility, and dejection sullenness, of which the hardships are without honour, and the labours without reward.

Of these calamities there seems not to be wanting a general conviction; we hear on every side the noise of trade, and see the streets thronged with numberless multitudes, whose faces are clouded with anxiety, and whose steps are hurried by precipitation, from no other motive than the hope of gain; and the whole world is put in motion, by the desire of that wealth, which is chiefly to be valued as it secures us from poverty; for it is more useful for defence than acquisition, and is not so much able to procure good as to exclude evil.

Yet there are always some whose passions or follies lead them to a conduct opposite to the general maxims and practice of mankind; some who seem to rush upon poverty with the same eagerness with which others avoid it, who see their revenues hourly lessened, and the estates which they inherit from their ancestors mouldering away, without resolution to change their course of life; who persevere against all remonstrances, and go forward with full career, though they see before them the precipice of destruction.

It is not my purpose in this paper, to expostulate with such as ruin their fortunes by expensive schemes of buildings and gardens, which they carry on with the same vanity that prompted them to begin, choosing, as it happens in a thousand other cases, the remote evil before the lighter, and deferring the shame of repentance till they incur the miseries of distress. Those for whom I intend my present admonitions, are the thoughtless, the negligent, and the dissolute; who having, by the viciousness of their own inclinations, or the seducements of alluring companions, been engaged in habits of expense, and accustomed to move in a certain round of pleasures disproportioned to their condition, are without power to extricate themselves from the enchantments of custom, avoid thought because they know it will be painful, and continue, from day to day, and from month to month, to anticipate their revenues, and sink every hour deeper into the gulfs of usury and extortion.

This folly has less claim to pity, because it cannot be imputed to the vehemence of sudden passion; nor can the mischief which it produces be extenuated as the effect of any single act, which rage, or desire, might execute before there could be time for an appeal to reason. These men are advancing towards misery by soft approaches, and destroying themselves, not by the violence of a blow, which, when once given, can never be recalled, but by a slow poison, hourly repeated, and obstinately continued.

This conduct is so absurd when it is examined by the unprejudiced eye of rational judgment, that nothing but expe-

rience could evince its possibility; yet, absurd as it is, the sudden fall of some families, and the sudden rise of others, prove it to be common; and every year sees many wretches reduced to contempt and want, by their costly sacrifices to pleasure and vanity.

It is the fate of almost every passion, when it has passed the bounds which nature prescribes, to counteract its own purposes. Too much rage hinders the warrior from circumspection, too much eagerness of profit hurts the credit of the trader, too much ardour takes away from the lover that easiness of address with which the ladies are delighted. Thus extravagance, though dictated by vanity, and incited by voluptuousness, seldom procures ultimately either applause or pleasure.

If praise be justly estimated by the character of those from whom it is received, little satisfaction will be given to the spendthrift by the encomiums which he purchases. For who are they that animate him in his pursuits, but young men thoughtless and abandoned like himself, unacquainted with all on which the wisdom of nations has impressed the stamp of excellence, and devoid alike of knowledge and of virtue? By whom is his profusion praised, but by wretches, who consider him as subservient to their purposes, Sirens that entice him to shipwreck, and Cyclops that are gaping to devour him?

Every man, whose knowledge, or whose virtue, can give value to his opinion, looks with scorn, or pity, neither of which can afford much gratification to pride, on him whom the panders of luxury have drawn into the circle of their influence, and whom he sees parcelled out among the different ministers of folly, and about to be torn to pieces by tailors and jockies, vintners and attorneys, who at once rob and ridicule him, and who are secretly triumphing over his weakness, when they present new incitements to his appetite, and heighten his desires by counterfeited applause.

Such is the praise that is purchased by prodigality. Even when it is yet not discovered to be false, it is the praise only of those whom it is reproachful to please, and whose sincerity is corrupted by their interest; men who live by the riots which they encourage, and who know that whenever their pupil grows wise, they shall lose their power. Yet with such flatteries, if they could last, might the cravings of vanity, which is seldom very delicate, be satisfied; but the time is always hastening forward when this triumph, poor as it is, shall vanish, and when those who now surround them with obsequiousness and compliments, fawn among his equipage, and

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But this poor broken satisfaction is
and must be expiated by a long series
In a short time the creditor grows imp

No. 54. Saturday, September, 22, 1750.

Truditur dies die,
Novæque pergunt interire lunæ;
Tu secanda marmora
Locas sub ipsum funus, et sepulchri
Immemor struis domos. Hor.

Day presses on the heels of day,
And moons increase to their decay;
But you, with thoughtless pride elate,
Unconscious of impending fate,
Command the pillar'd dome to rise,
When lo! thy tomb forgotten lies. Francis.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—I have lately been called, from a mingled life of business and amusement, to attend the last hours of an old friend; an office which has filled me if not with melancholy, at least with serious reflections, and turned my thoughts towards the contemplation of those subjects, which though of the utmost importance and indubitable certainty, are generally secluded from our regard, by the jollity of health, the hurry of employment, and even by the calmer diversions of study and speculation; or if they become accidental topics of conversation and argument, yet rarely sink deep into the heart, but give occasion only to some subtilties of reasoning, or elegancies of declamation, which are heard, applauded, and forgotten.

It is, indeed, not hard to conceive how a man accustomed to extend his views through a long concatenation of causes and effects, to trace things from their origin to their period, and compare means with ends, may discover the weakness of human schemes; detect the fallacies by which mortals are deluded; show the insufficiency of wealth, honours, and power, to real happiness; and please himself, and his auditors, with learned lectures on the vanity of life.

But though the speculatist may see and show the folly of terrestrial hopes, fears and desires, every hour will give proofs that he never felt it. Trace him through the day or year, and you will find him acting upon principles which he has in common with the illiterate and unenlightened, angry and pleased like the lowest of the vulgar, pursuing with the same ardour, the same designs, grasping, with all the eagerness of transport, those riches which he knows he cannot

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sceptre, and hypocrisy without her

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shall be bestowed upon another, authority which shall this night expire for ever, and praise which, however merited, or however sincere, shall, after a few moments, be heard no more.

In those hours of seriousness and wisdom, nothing appeared to raise his spirits, or gladden his heart, but the recollection of acts of goodness; nor to excite his attention, but some opportunity for the exercise of the duties of religion. Every thing that terminated on this side of the grave was received with coldness and indifference, and regarded rather in consequence of the habit of valuing it, than from any opinion that it deserved value; it had little more prevalence over his mind than a bubble that was now broken, a dream from which he was awake. His whole powers were engrossed by the consideration of another state, and all conversation was tedious, that had not some tendency to disengage him from human affairs, and open his prospects into futurity.

It is now past, we have closed his eyes, and heard him breathe the groan of expiration. At the sight of this last conflict, I felt a sensation never known to me before; a confusion of passions, an awful stillness of sorrow, a gloomy terrour without a name. The thoughts that entered my soul were too strong to be diverted, and too piercing to be endured; but such violence cannot be lasting, the storm subsided in a short time, I wept, retired, and grew calm.

I have from that time frequently revolved in my mind the effects which the observation of death produces in those who are not wholly without the power and use of reflection; for by far the greater part is wholly unregarded. Their friends and their enemies sink into the grave without raising any uncommon emotion, or reminding them that they are themselves on the edge of the precipice, and that they must soon plunge into the gulf of eternity.

It seems to me remarkable that death increases our veneration for the good, and extenuates our hatred of the bad. Those virtues which once we envied, as Horace observes, because they eclipsed our own, can now no longer obstruct our reputation, and we have therefore no interest to suppress their praise. That wickedness, which we feared for its malignity, is now become impotent, and the man whose name filled us with alarm, and rage, and indignation, can at last be considered only with pity, or contempt.

When a friend is carried to his grave, we at once find excuses for every weakness, and palliations of every fault; we recollect a thousand endearments, which before glided off our minds without impression, a thousand favours unrepaid, a

animate his riots, shall turn upon him with insolence, and reproach him with the vices promoted by themselves.

And as little pretensions has the man who squanders his estate, by vain or vicious expenses, to greater degrees of pleasure than are obtained by others. To make any happiness sincere, it is necessary that we believe it to be lasting; since whatever we suppose ourselves in danger of losing, must be enjoyed with solicitude and uneasiness, and the more value we set upon it, the more must the present possession be imbittered. How can he then be envied for his felicity, who knows that its continuance cannot be expected, and who is conscious that a very short time will give him up to the gripe of poverty, which will be harder to be born, as he has given way to more excesses, wantoned in greater abundance, and indulged his appetites with more profuseness?

It appears evident that frugality is necessary even to complete pleasures of expense; for it may be generally remarked of those who squander what they know their fortune not sufficient to allow, that in their most jovial expense, there always breaks out some proof of discontent and impatience; they either scatter with a kind of wild desperation, and affected lavishness, as criminals brave the gallows when they cannot escape it, or pay their money with a peevish anxiety, and endeavour at once to spend idly, and to save meanly: having neither firmness to deny their passions, nor courage to gratify them, they murmur at their own enjoyments, and poison the bowl of pleasure by reflection on the cost.

Among these men there is often the vociferation of merriment, but very seldom the tranquillity of cheerfulness; they inflame their imaginations to a kind of momentary jollity. by the help of wine and riot, and consider it as the first business of the night to stupify recollection, and lay that reason asleep which disturbs their gaiety, and calls upon them to retreat from ruin.

But this poor broken satisfaction is of short continuance, and must be expiated by a long series of misery and regret. In a short time the creditor grows impatient, the last acre is sold, the passions and appetites still continue their tyranny, with incessant calls for their usual gratifications, and the remainder of life passes away in vain repentance, or impotent desire.

No. 54. Saturday, September, 22, 1750.

Truditur dies die,
Novæque pergunt interire lunæ;
Tu secanda marmora
Locas sub ipsum funus, et sepulchri
Immemor struis domos. Hor.

Day presses on the heels of day,
And moons increase to their decay;
But you, with thoughtless pride elate,
Unconscious of impending fate,
Command the pillar'd dome to rise,
When lo! thy tomb forgotten lies. Francis.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—I have lately been called, from a mingled life of business and amusement, to attend the last hours of an old friend; an office which has filled me if not with melancholy, at least with serious reflections, and turned my thoughts towards the contemplation of those subjects, which though of the utmost importance and indubitable certainty, are generally secluded from our regard, by the jollity of health, the hurry of employment, and even by the calmer diversions of study and speculation; or if they become accidental topics of conversation and argument, yet rarely sink deep into the heart, but give occasion only to some subtilties of reasoning, or elegancies of declamation, which are heard, applauded, and forgotten.

It is, indeed, not hard to conceive how a man accustomed to extend his views through a long concatenation of causes and effects, to trace things from their origin to their period, and compare means with ends, may discover the weakness of human schemes: detect the fallacies by which mortals are deluded: show the insufficiency of wealth, honours, and power, to real happiness; and please himself, and his auditors, with learned lectures on the vanity of life.

But though the speculatist may see and show the folly of terrestrial hopes, fears and desires, every hour will give proofs that he never felt it. Trace him through the day or year, and you will find him acting upon principles which he has in common with the illiterate and unenlightened, angry and pleased like the lowest of the vulgar, pursuing with the same ardour, the same designs, grasping, with all the eagerness of transport, those riches which he knows he cannot

keep, and swelling with the applause which he has gained by proving that applause is of no value.

The only conviction that rushes upon the soul, and takes away from our appetites and passions the power of resistance, is to be found, where I have received it, at the bed of a dying friend. To enter this school of wisdom is not the peculiar privilege of geometricians; the most sublime and important precepts require no uncommon opportunities, nor laborious preparations; they are enforced without the aid of eloquence, and understood without skill in analytic science. Every tongue can utter them, and every understanding can conceive them. He that wishes in earnest to obtain just sentiments concerning his condition, and would be intimately acquainted with the world, may find instructions on every side. He that desires to enter behind the scene, which every art has been employed to decorate, and every passion labours to illuminate, and wishes to see life stripped of those ornaments which make it glitter on the stage, and exposed in its natural meanness, impotence, and nakedness, may find all the delusion laid open in the chamber of disease: he will there find vanity devested of her robes, power deprived of her sceptre, and hypocrisy without her mask.

The friend whom I have lost was a man eminent for genius, and, like others of the same class, sufficiently pleased with acceptance and applause. Being caressed by those who have preferments and riches in their disposal, he considered himself as in the direct road of advancement, and had caught the flame of ambition by approaches to its object. But in the midst of his hopes, his projects, and his gaieties, he was seized by a lingering disease, which, from its first stage, he knew to be incurable. Here was an end of all his visions of greatness and happiness; from the first hour that his health declined, all his former pleasures grew tasteless. His friends expected to please him by those accounts of the growth of his reputation, which were formerly certain of being well received; but they soon found how little he was now affected by compliments, and how vainly they attempted, by flattery, to exhilarate the languor of weakness, and relieve the solicitude of approaching death. Whoever would know how much piety and virtue surpass all external goods, might here have seen them weighed against each other, where all that gives motion to the active, and elevation to the eminent, all that sparkles in the eye of hope, and pants in the bosom of suspicion, at once became dust in the balance, without weight and without regard. Riches, authority, and praise, lose all their influence when they are considered as riches which to-morrow

shall be bestowed upon another, authority which shall this night expire for ever, and praise which, however merited, or however sincere, shall, after a few moments, be heard no more.

In those hours of seriousness and wisdom, nothing appeared to raise his spirits, or gladden his heart, but the recollection of acts of goodness; nor to excite his attention, but some opportunity for the exercise of the duties of religion. Every thing that terminated on this side of the grave was received with coldness and indifference, and regarded rather in consequence of the habit of valuing it, than from any opinion that it deserved value; it had little more prevalence over his mind than a bubble that was now broken, a dream from which he was awake. His whole powers were engrossed by the consideration of another state, and all conversation was tedious, that had not some tendency to disengage him from human affairs, and open his prospects into futurity.

It is now past, we have closed his eyes, and heard him breathe the groan of expiration. At the sight of this last conflict, I felt a sensation never known to me before; a confusion of passions, an awful stillness of sorrow, a gloomy terrour without a name. The thoughts that entered my soul were too strong to be diverted, and too piercing to be endured; but such violence cannot be lasting, the storm subsided in a short time, I wept, retired, and grew calm.

I have from that time frequently revolved in my mind the effects which the observation of death produces in those who are not wholly without the power and use of reflection; for by far the greater part is wholly unregarded. Their friends and their enemies sink into the grave without raising any uncommon emotion, or reminding them that they are themselves on the edge of the precipice, and that they must soon plunge into the gulf of eternity.

It seems to me remarkable that death increases our veneration for the good, and extenuates our hatred of the bad. Those virtues which once we envied, as Horace observes, because they eclipsed our own, can now no longer obstruct our reputation, and we have therefore no interest to suppress their praise. That wickedness, which we feared for its malignity, is now become impotent, and the man whose name filled us with alarm, and rage, and indignation, can at last be considered only with pity, or contempt.

When a friend is carried to his grave, we at once find excuses for every weakness, and palliations of every fault; we recollect a thousand endearments, which before glided off our minds without impression, a thousand favours unrepaid, a

thousand duties unperformed, and wish, vainly wish for his return, not so much that we may receive, as that we may bestow happiness, and recompense that kindness which before we never understood.

There is not, perhaps, to a mind well instructed, a more painful occurrence, than the death of one whom we have injured without reparation. Our crime seems now irretrievable, it is indelibly recorded, and the stamp of fate is fixed upon it. We consider, with the most afflictive anguish, the pain which we have given, and now cannot alleviate, and the losses which we have caused, and now cannot repair.

Of the same kind are the emotions which the death of an emulator or competitor produces. Whoever had qualities to alarm our jealousy, had excellence to deserve our fondness; and to whatever ardour of opposition interest may inflame us, no man ever outlived an enemy, whom he did not then wish to have made a friend. Those who are versed in literary history know, that the elder Scaliger was the redoubted antagonist of Cardan and Erasmus; yet at the death of each of his great rivals he relented, and complained that they were snatched away from him before their reconciliation was completed.

Tu-ne etiam moreris? Ah! quid me linquis, Erasme,
Ante meus quam sit conciliatus amor?

Art thou too fallen? ere anger could subside
And love return, has great *Erasmus* died?

Such are the sentiments with which we finally review the effects of passion, but which we sometimes delay till we can no longer rectify our errours. Let us therefore make haste to do what we shall certainly at last wish to have done; let us return the caresses of our friends, and endeavour by mutual endearments to heighten that tenderness which is the balm of life. Let us be quick to repent of injuries while repentance may not be a barren anguish, and let us open our eyes to every rival excellence, and pay early and willingly those honours which justice will compel us to pay at last.

ATHANATUS.

No. 55. Tuesday, September 25, 1750.

Maturo proprior desine funeri
Inter ludere virgines,
Et stellis maculam spargere candidis:
Non siquid Pholoen satis
Et te, Chlori, decet.——— Hor.

Now near to death that comes but slow,
Now thou art stepping down below;
Sport not amongst the blooming maids,
But think on ghosts and empty shades:
What suits with *Pholoe* in her bloom,
Grey *Chloris*, will not the become;
A bed is different from a tomb. Creech.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—I have been but a little time conversant in the world, yet I have already had frequent opportunities of observing the little efficacy of remonstrance and complaint, which, however extorted by oppression, or supported by reason, are detested by one part of the world as rebellion, censured by another as peevishness, by some heard with an appearance of compassion, only to betray any of those sallies of vehemence and resentment, which are apt to break out upon encouragement, and by others passed over with indifference and neglect, as matters in which they have no concern, and which if they should endeavour to examine or regulate, they might draw mischief upon themselves.

Yet since it is no less natural for those who think themselves injured to complain, than for others to neglect their complaints, I shall venture to lay my case before you, in hopes that you will enforce my opinion, if you think it just, or endeavour to rectify my sentiments, if I am mistaken. I expect, at least, that you will divest yourself of partiality, and that whatever your age or solemnity may be, you will not with the dotard's insolence, pronounce me ignorant and foolish, perverse and refractory, only because you perceive that I am young.

My father dying when I was but ten years old, left me, and a brother two years younger than myself, to the care of my mother, a woman of birth and education, whose prudence or virtue he had no reason to distrust. She felt, for some time, all the sorrow which nature calls forth, upon the final separation of persons dear to one another; and as her grief was exhausted by its own violence, it subsided into tender-

ness for me and my brother, and the year of mourning was spent in caresses, consolations, and instruction, in celebration of my father's virtues, in professions of perpetual regard to his memory, and hourly instances of such fondness as gratitude will not easily suffer me to forget.

But when the term of this mournful felicity was expired, and my mother appeared again without the ensigns of sorrow, the ladies of her acquaintance began to tell her, upon whatever motives, that it was time to live like the rest of the world; a powerful argument, which is seldom used to a woman without effect. Lady Giddy was incessantly relating the occurrences of the town, and Mrs. Gravely told her privately, with great tenderness, that it began to be publicly observed how much she overacted her part, and that most of her acquaintance suspected her hope of procuring another husband to be the true ground of all that appearance of tenderness and piety.

All the officiousness of kindness and folly was busied to change her conduct. She was at one time alarmed with censure, and at another fired with praise. She was told of balls, where others shone only because she was absent; of new comedies, to which all the town was crowding; and of many ingenious ironies, by which domestic diligence was made contemptible.

It is difficult for virtue to stand alone against fear on one side, and pleasure on the other; especially when no actual crime is proposed, and prudence itself can suggest many reasons for relaxation and indulgence. My mamma was at last persuaded to accompany Miss Giddy to a play. She was received with a boundless profusion of compliments, and attended home by a very fine gentleman. Next day she was with less difficulty prevailed on to play at Mrs. Gravely's, and came home gay and lively; for the distinctions that had been paid her awakened her vanity, and good luck had kept her principles of frugality from giving her disturbance. She now made her second entrance into the world, and her friends were sufficiently industrious to prevent any return to her former life; every morning brought messages of invitation, and every evening was passed in places of diversion, from which she for some time complained that she had rather been absent. In a short time she began to feel the happiness of acting without control, of being unaccountable for her hours, her expenses, and her company; and learned by degrees to drop an expression of contempt, or pity, at the mention of ladies whose husbands were suspected of restraining their

pleasures, or their play, and confessed that she loved to go and come as she pleased.

I was still favoured with some incidental precepts and transient endearments, and was now and then fondly kissed for smiling like my papa: but most part of her morning was spent in comparing the opinion of her maid and milliner, contriving some variation in her dress, visiting shops, and sending compliments; and the rest of the day was too short for visits, cards, plays, and concerts.

She now began to discover that it was impossible to educate children properly at home. Parents could not have them always in their sight; the society of servants was contagious; company produced boldness and spirit; emulation excited industry; and a large school was naturally the first step into the open world. A thousand other reasons she alleged, some of little force in themselves, but so well seconded by pleasure, vanity and idleness, that they soon overcame all the remaining principles of kindness and piety, and both I and my brother were despatched to boarding-schools.

How my mamma spent her time when she was thus disburthened I am not able to inform you, but I have reason to believe that trifles and amusements took still faster hold of her heart. At first, she visited me at school, and afterwards wrote to me; but in a short time both her visits and her letters were at an end, and no other notice was taken of me than to remit money for my support.

When I came home at the vacation, I found myself coldly received, with an observation, "that this girl will presently be a woman." I was, after the usual stay, sent to school again, and overheard my mother say, as I was a-going, "Well, now I shall recover." In six months more I came again, and, with the usual childish alacrity, was running to my mother's embrace, when she stopt me with exclamations at the suddenness and enormity of my growth, having, she said, never seen any body shoot up so much at my age. She was sure no other girls spread at that rate, and she hated to have children look like women before their time. I was disconcerted, and retired without hearing any thing more than, "Nay, if you are angry, Madam Steeple, you may walk off."

When once the forms of civility are violated, there remains little hope of return to kindness or decency. My mamma made this appearance of resentment a reason for continuing her malignity; and poor Miss Maypole, for that was my appellation, was never mentioned or spoken to but with some expression of anger or dislike.

She had yet the pleasure of dressing me like a child, and I

know not when I should have been thought fit to change my habit, had I not been rescued by a maiden sister of my father, who could not bare to see women in hanging sleeves, and therefore presented me with brocade for a gown, for which I should have thought myself under great obligations, had she not accompanied her favour with some hints that my mamma might now consider her age, and give me her ear-rings, which she had shown long enough in public places.

I now left the school, and came to live with my mamma, who considered me as an usurper that had seized the rights of a woman before they were due, and was pushing her down the precipice of age, that I might reign without a superior. While I am thus beheld with jealousy and suspicion, you will readily believe that it is difficult to please. Every word and look is an offence. I never speak, but I pretend to some qualities and excellencies, which it is criminal to possess; if I am gay, she thinks it early enough to coquette; if I am grave, she hates a prude in bibs; if I venture into company, I am in haste for a husband; if I retire to my chamber, such matron-like ladies are lovers of contemplation. I am on one pretence or other generally excluded from her assemblies, nor am I ever suffered to visit at the same place with my mamma. Every one wonders why she does not bring Miss more into the world, and when she comes home in vapours, I am certain that she has heard either of my beauty or my wit, and expect nothing for the ensuing week but taunts and menaces, contradiction and reproaches.

Thus I live in a state of continual persecution, only because I was born ten years too soon, and cannot stop the course of nature or of time, but am unhappily a woman before my mother can willingly cease to be a girl. I believe you would contribute to the happiness of many families, if, by any arguments or persuasions, you could make mothers ashamed of rivalling their children; if you could show them, that though they may refuse to grow wise, they must inevitably grow old; and that the proper solaces of age are not music and compliments, but wisdom and devotion; that those who are so unwilling to quit the world will soon be driven from it; and that it is therefore their interest to retire while there yet remain a few hours for nobler employments.

I am, &c.

No. 56. Saturday, September 29, 1750.

——Valeat res ludicra, si me
Palma negata macrum, donata reducit opimum. Hor.

Farewell the stage; for humbly I disclaim
Such fond pursuits of pleasure, or of fame,
If I must sink in shame, or swell with pride,
As the gay palm is granted or denied. Francis.

Nothing is more unpleasing than to find that offence has been received when none was intended, and that pain has been given to those who were not guilty of any provocation. As the great end of society is mutual beneficence, a good man is always uneasy when he finds himself acting in opposition to the purposes of life; because, though his conscience may easily acquit him of *malice prepense*, of settled hatred, or contrivances of mischief, yet he seldom can be certain, that he has not failed by negligence, or indolence; that he has not been hindered from consulting the common interest by too much regard to his own ease, or too much indifference to the happiness of others.

Nor is it necessary, that, to feel this uneasiness, the mind should be extended to any great diffusion of generosity, or melted by uncommon warmth of benevolence; for that prudence which the world teaches, and a quick sensibility of private interest, will direct us to shun needless enmities; since there is no man whose kindness we may not some time want, or by whose malice we may not some time suffer.

I have therefore frequently looked with wonder, and now and then with pity, at the thoughtlessness with which some alienate from themselves the affections of all whom chance, business, or inclination, brings in their way. When we see a man pursuing some darling interest, without much regard to the opinion of the world, we justly consider him as corrupt and dangerous, but are not long in discovering his motives; we see him actuated by passions which are hard to be resisted, and deluded by appearances which have dazzled stronger eyes. But the greater part of those who set mankind at defiance by hourly irritation, and who live but to infuse malignity, and multiply enemies, have no hopes to foster, no designs to promote, nor any expectations of attaining power by insolence, or of climbing to greatness by trampling on others. They give up all the sweets of kindness, for the sake of peevishness, petulance or gloom; and alienate the world by neglect of the common forms of civility, and breach of the established laws of conversation.

Every one must, in the walks of life, have met with men of whom all speak with censure, though they are not chargeable with any crime, and whom none can be persuaded to love, though a reason can scarcely be assigned why they should be hated; and who, if their good qualities and actions sometimes force a commendation, have their panegyric always concluded with confessions of disgust; "he is a good man, but I cannot like him." Surely such persons have sold the esteem of the world at too low a price, since they have lost one of the rewards of virtue, without gaining the profits of wickedness.

This ill economy of fame is sometimes the effect of stupidity. Men whose perceptions are languid and sluggish, who lament nothing but loss of money, and feel nothing but a blow, are often at a difficulty to guess why they are encompassed with enemies, though they neglect all those arts by which men are endeared to one another. They comfort themselves that they have lived irreproachably: that none can charge them with having endangered his life, or diminished his possessions; and therefore conclude that they suffer by some invincible fatality, or impute the malice of their neighbours to ignorance or envy. They wrap themselves up in their innocence, and enjoy the congratulations of their own hearts, without knowing or suspecting that they are every day deservedly incurring resentments, by withholding from those with whom they converse, that regard, or appearance of regard, to which every one is entitled by the customs of the world.

There are many injuries which almost every man feels, though he does not complain, and which, upon those whom virtue, elegance, or vanity, have made delicate and tender, fix deep and lasting impressions; as there are many arts of graciousness and conciliation, which are to be practised without expense, and by which those may be made our friends, who have never received from us any real benefit. Such arts, when they include neither guilt nor meanness, it is surely reasonable to learn, for who would want that love which is so easily to be gained? And such injuries are to be avoided; for who would be hated without profit?

Some, indeed, there are, for whom the excuse of ignorance or negligence cannot be alleged, because it is apparent that they are not only careless of pleasing, but studious to offend; that they contrive to make all approaches to them difficult and vexatious, and imagine that they aggrandize themselves by wasting the time of others in useless attendance, by mortifying them with slights, and teasing them with affronts.

Men of this kind are generally to be found among those that have not mingled much in general conversation, but spent their lives amidst the obsequiousness of dependents, and the flattery of parasites; and by long consulting only their own inclination, have forgotten that others have claim to the same deference.

Tyranny thus avowed, is indeed an exuberance of pride, by which all mankind is so much enraged, that it is never quietly endured, except in those who can reward the patience which they exact; and insolence is generally surrounded only by such whose baseness inclines them to think nothing insupportable that produces gain, and who can laugh at scurrility and rudeness, with a luxurious table and an open purse.

But though all wanton provocations and contemptuous insolence are to be diligently avoided, there is no less danger in timid compliance and tame resignation. It is common for soft and fearful tempers to give themselves up implicitly to the direction of the bold, the turbulent, and the overbearing, of those whom they do not believe wiser or better than themselves; to recede from the best designs where opposition must be encountered, and to fall off from virtue for fear of censure.

Some firmness and resolution is necessary to the discharge of duty; but it is a very unhappy state of life in which the necessity of such struggles frequently occurs; for no man is defeated without some resentment, which will be continued with obstinacy while he believes himself in the right, and exerted with bitterness, if even to his own conviction, he is detected in the wrong.

Even though no regard he had to the external consequences of contrariety and dispute, it must be painful to a worthy mind to put others in pain, and there will be danger lest the kindest nature may be vitiated by too long a custom of debate and contest.

I am afraid that I may be taxed with insensibility by many of my correspondents, who believe their contributions unjustly neglected. And, indeed, when I sit before a pile of papers, of which each is the production of laborious study, and the offspring of a fond parent, I, who know the passions of an author, cannot remember how long they have lain in my boxes unregarded, without imagining to myself the various changes of sorrow, impatience, and resentment, which the writers must have felt in this tedious interval.

These reflections are still more awakened, when, upon perusal, I find some of them calling for a place in the next paper, a place which they have never yet obtained: others

writing in a style of superiority and haughtiness, as secure of deference, and above fear of criticism; others humbly offering their weak assistance with softness and submission, which they believe impossible to be resisted; some introducing their compositions with a menace of the contempt which he that refuses them will incur; others applying privately to the booksellers for their interest and solicitation; every one by different ways endeavouring to secure the bliss of publication. I cannot but consider myself as placed in a very incommodious situation, where I am forced to repress confidence, which it is pleasing to indulge, to repay civilities with appearances of neglect, and so frequently to offend those by whom I never was offended.

I know well how rarely an author, fired with the beauties of his new composition, contains his raptures in his own bosom, and how naturally he imparts to his friends his expectations of renown: and as I can easily conceive the eagerness with which a new paper is snatched up, by one who expects to find it filled with his own production, and perhaps has called his companions to share the pleasure of a second perusal, I grieve for the disappointment which he is to feel at the fatal inspection. His hopes, however, do not yet forsake him; he is certain of giving lustre the next day. The next day comes, and again he pants with expectation, and having dreamed of laurels and Parnassus, casts his eyes upon the barren page, with which he is doomed never more to be delighted.

For such cruelty what atonement can be made? For such calamities what alleviation can be found? I am afraid that the mischief already done must be without reparation, and all that deserves my care is prevention for the future. Let, therefore, the next friendly contributor, whoever he be, observe the cautions of Swift, and write secretly in his own chamber, without communicating his design to his nearest friend, for the nearest friend will be pleased with an opportunity of laughing. Let him carry it to the post himself, and wait in silence for the event. If it is published and praised, he may then declare himself the author; if it be suppressed, he may wonder in private without much vexation; and if it be censured, he may join in the cry, and lament the dulness of the writing generation.

No. 57. Tuesday, October 2, 1750.

Non intelligunt homines quam magnum vectigal sit parsimonia.
Tull.

The world has not yet learned the riches of frugality.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—I am always pleased when I see literature made useful, and scholars descending from that elevation, which, as it raises them above common life, must likewise hinder them from beholding the ways of men otherwise than in a cloud of bustle and confusion. Having lived a life of business, and remarked how seldom any occurrences emerge for which great qualities are required, I have learned the necessity of regarding little things; and though I do not pretend to give laws to the legislators of mankind, or to limit the range of those powerful minds that carry light and heat through all the regions of knowledge, yet I have long thought, that the greatest part of those who lose themselves in studies by which I have not found that they grow much wiser, might, with more advantage both to the public and themselves, apply their understandings to domestic arts, and store their minds with axioms of humble prudence, and private economy.

Your late paper on frugality was very elegant and pleasing, but, in my opinion, not sufficiently adapted to common readers, who pay little regard to the music of periods, the artifice of connection, or the arrangement of the flowers of rhetoric; but require a few plain and cogent instructions, which may sink into the mind by their own weight.

Frugality is so necessary to the happiness of the world, so beneficial in its various forms to every rank of men, from the highest of human potentates, to the lowest labourer or artificer; and the miseries which the neglect of it produces are so numerous and so grievous, that it ought to be recommended with every variation of address, and adapted to every class of understanding.

Whether those who treat morals as a science will allow frugality to be numbered among the virtues, I have not thought it necessary to inquire. For I, who draw my opinions from a careful observation of the world, am satisfied with knowing what is abundantly sufficient for practice, that

if it be not a virtue, it is, at least, a quality, which can seldom exist without some virtues, and without which few virtues can exist. Frugality may be termed the daughter of Prudence, the sister of Temperance, and the parent of Liberty. He that is extravagant will quickly become poor, and poverty will enforce dependence, and invite corruption; it will almost always produce a passive compliance with the wickedness of others; and there are few who do not learn by degrees to practise those crimes which they cease to censure.

If there are any who do not dread poverty as dangerous to virtue, yet mankind seem unanimous enough in abhorring it as destructive to happiness; and all to whom want is terrible, upon whatever principle, ought to think themselves obliged to learn the sage maxims of our parsimonious ancestors, and attain the salutary arts of contradicting expense; for without frugality none can be rich, and with it very few would be poor.

To most other acts of virtue or exertions of wisdom, a concurrence of many circumstances is necessary, some previous knowledge must be attained, some uncommon gifts of nature possessed, or some opportunity produced by an extraordinary combination of things; but the mere power of saving what is already in our hands, must be easy of acquisition to every mind; and as the example of Bacon may show that the highest intellect cannot safely neglect it, a thousand instances will every day prove, that the meanest may practise it with success.

Riches cannot be within the reach of great numbers, because to be rich is to possess more than is commonly placed in a single hand: and, if many could obtain the sum which now makes a man wealthy, the name of wealth must then be transferred to still greater accumulation. But I am not certain that it is equally impossible to exempt the lower classes of mankind from poverty; because, though whatever be the wealth of the community, some will always have least, and he that has less than any other is comparatively poor; yet I do not see any co-active necessity that many should be without the indispensable conveniencies of life: but am sometimes inclined to imagine, that, casual calamities excepted, there might, by universal prudence, be procured an universal exemption from want; and that he who should happen to have least, might notwithstanding have enough.

But without entering too far into speculations which I do not remember that any political calculator has attempted, and in which the most perspicacious reasoner may be easily

bewildered, it is evident that they to whom Providence has allotted no other care, but of their own fortune and their own virtue, which make far the greater part of mankind, have sufficient incitements to personal frugality, since, whatever might be its general effect upon provinces or nations, by which it is never likely to be tried, we know with certainty, that there is scarcely any individual entering the world, who, by prudent parsimony, may not reasonably promise himself a cheerful competence in the decline of life.

The prospect of penury in age is so gloomy and terrifying, that every man who looks before him must resolve to avoid it; and it must be avoided generally by the science of sparing. For, though in every age there are some, who by bold adventures, or by favourable accidents, rise suddenly to riches, yet it is dangerous to indulge hopes of such rare events: and the bulk of mankind must owe their affluence to small and gradual profits, below which their expense must be resolutely reduced.

You must therefore think me sinking below the dignity of a practical philosopher, when I recommend to the consideration of your readers, from the statesman to the apprentice, a position replete with mercantile wisdom, *A penny saved is twopence got*; which may, I think, be accommodated to all conditions, by observing not only that they who pursue any lucrative employment will save time when they forbear expense, and that the time may be employed to the increase of profit; but that they who are above such minute considerations will find, by every victory over appetite or passion, new strength added to the mind, will gain the power of refusing those solicitations by which the young and vivacious are hourly assaulted, and in time set themselves above the reach of extravagance and folly.

It may, perhaps, be inquired by those who are willing rather to cavil than to learn, what is the just measure of frugality? and when expense, not absolutely necessary, degenerates into profusion? To such question no general answer can be returned; since the liberty of spending, or necessity of parsimony, may be varied without end by different circumstances. It may, however, be laid down as a rule never to be broken, that a *man's voluntary expense should not exceed his revenue*. A maxim so obvious and incontrovertible, that the civil law ranks the prodigal with the madman, and debars them equally from the conduct of their own affairs. Another precept arising from the former, and indeed included in it, is yet necessary to be distinctly impressed upon the warm, the fanciful, and the brave; *Let no man anticipate uncertain profits*. Let

no man presume to spend upon hopes, to trust his own abilities for means of deliverance from penury, to give a loose to his present desires, and leave the reckoning to fortune or to virtue.

To these cautions, which I suppose are, at least among the graver part of mankind, undisputed, I will add another, *Let no man squander against his inclination.* With this precept it may be, perhaps, imagined easy to comply; yet if those whom profusion has buried in prisons, or driven into banishment, were examined, it would be found that very few were ruined by their own choice, or purchased pleasure with the loss of their estates; but that they suffered themselves to be born away by the violence of those with whom they conversed, and yielded reluctantly to a thousand prodigalities, either from a trivial emulation of wealth and spirit, or a mean fear of contempt and ridicule; an emulation for the prize of folly, or the dread of the laugh of fools.

I am, sir,

Your humble Servant,

SOPHRON.

No. 58. SATURDAY, October 6, 1750.

——Improbæ
Crescunt divitiæ, tamen
Curtæ nescio quid semper abest rei. HOR.

But, while in heaps his wicked wealth ascends,
He is not of his wish possess'd;
There's something wanting still to make him bless'd.
FRANCIS.

As the love of money has been, in all ages, one of the passions that have given great disturbance to the tranquillity of the world, there is no topic more copiously treated by the ancient moralists than the folly of devoting the heart to the accumulation of riches. They who are acquainted with these authors need not be told how riches excite pity, contempt, or reproach, whenever they are mentioned; with what numbers of examples the danger of large possessions is illustrated; and how all the powers of reason and eloquence have been exhausted in endeavours to eradicate a desire, which seems to have entrenched itself too strongly in the mind to be driven out, and which, perhaps, had not lost its power, even over those who declaimed against it, but would have broken out in

the poet or sage, if it had been excited by opportunity, and invigorated by the approximation of its proper object.

Their arguments have been, indeed, so unsuccessful, that I know not whether it can be shown, that by all the wit and reason which this favourite cause has called forth, a single convert was ever made; that even one man has refused to be rich, when to be rich was in his power, from the conviction of the greater happiness of a narrow fortune; or disburthened himself of wealth when he had tried its inquietudes, merely to enjoy the peace and leisure and security of a mean and unenvied state.

It is true, indeed, that many have neglected opportunities of raising themselves to honours and to wealth, and rejected the kindest offers of fortune: but however their moderation may be boasted by themselves, or admired by such as only view them at a distance, it will be, perhaps, seldom found that they value riches less, but that they dread labour or danger more than others; they are unable to rouse themselves to action, to strain in the race of competition, or to stand the shock of contest; but though they, therefore, decline the toil of climbing, they nevertheless wish themselves aloft, and would willingly enjoy what they dare not seize.

Others have retired from high stations, and voluntarily condemned themselves to privacy and obscurity. But, even these will not afford many occasions of triumph to the philosopher; for they have commonly either quitted that only which they thought themselves unable to hold, and prevented disgrace by resignation; or they have been induced to try new measures by general inconstancy, which always dreams of happiness in novelty, or by a gloomy disposition, which is disgusted in the same degree with every state, and wishes every scene of life to change as soon as it is beheld. Such men found high and low stations equally unable to satisfy the wishes of a distempered mind, and were unable to shelter themselves in the closet retreat from disappointment, solicitude, and misery.

Yet though these admonitions have been thus neglected by those, who either enjoyed riches, or were able to procure them, it is not rashly to be determined that they are altogether without use; for since far the greatest part of mankind must be confined to conditions comparatively mean, and placed in situations from which they naturally look up with envy to the eminences before them, those writers cannot be thought ill employed that have administered remedies to discontent almost universal, by showing, that what we cannot reach may very well be forborn, that the inequality of distribution, at

which we murmur, is for the most part less than it seems, and that the greatness, which we admire at a distance, has much fewer advantages, and much less splendour, when we are suffered to approach it.

It is the business of moralists to detect the frauds of fortune, and to show that she imposes upon the careless eye, by a quick succession of shadows, which will shrink to nothing in the gripe; that she disguises life in extrinsic ornaments, which serve only for show, and are laid aside in the hours of solitude, and of pleasure; and that when greatness aspires either to felicity or to wisdom, it shakes off those distinctions which dazzle the gazer, and awe the supplicant.

It may be remarked, that they whose condition has not afforded them the light of moral or religious instruction, and who collect all their ideas by their own eyes, and digest them by their own understandings, seem to consider those who are placed in ranks of remote superiority, as almost another and higher species of beings. As themselves have known little other misery than the consequences of want, they are with difficulty persuaded that where there is wealth there can be sorrow, or that those who glitter in dignity, and glide along in affluence, can be acquainted with pains and cares like those which lie heavy upon the rest of mankind.

This prejudice is, indeed, confined to the lowest meanness, and the darkest ignorance; but it is so confined only because others have been shown its folly; and its falsehood, because it has been opposed in its progress by history and philosophy, and hindered from spreading its infection by powerful preservatives.

The doctrine of the contempt of wealth, though it has not been able to extinguish avarice or ambition, or suppress that reluctance with which a man passes his days in a state of inferiority, must, at least, have made the lower conditions less grating and wearisome, and has consequently contributed to the general security of life, by hindering that fraud and violence, rapine and circumvention, which must have been produced by an unbounded eagerness of wealth, arising from an unshaken conviction that to be rich is to be happy.

Whoever finds himself incited, by some violent impulse of passion, to pursue riches as the chief end of being, must surely be so much alarmed by the successive admonitions of those whose experience and sagacity have recommended them as the guides of mankind, as to stop and consider whether he is about to engage in an undertaking that will reward his toil, and to examine, before he rushes to wealth, through right and wrong, what it will confer when he has acquired it;

and this examination will seldom fail to repress his ardour, and retard his violence.

Wealth is nothing in itself, it is not useful but when it departs from us; its value is found only in that which it can purchase, which, if we suppose it put to its best use by those that possess it, seems not much to deserve the desire or envy of a wise man. It is certain that, with regard to corporal enjoyment, money can neither open new avenues to pleasure, nor block up the passages of anguish. Disease and infirmity still continue to torture and enfeeble, perhaps exasperated by luxury, or promoted by softness. With respect to the mind, it has rarely been observed, that wealth contribuies much to quicken the discernment, enlarge the capacity, or elevate the imagination; but may, by hiring flattery, or laying diligence asleep, confirm error, and harden stupidity.

Wealth cannot confer greatness, for nothing can make that great which the decree of nature has ordained to be little. The bramble may be placed in a hot-bed, but can never become an oak. Even royalty itself is not able to give that dignity which it happens not to find, but oppresses feeble minds, though it may elevate the strong. The world has been governed in the name of kings, whose existence has scarcely been perceived by any real effects beyond their own palaces.

When therefore the desire of wealth is taking hold of the heart, let us look round and see how it operates upon those whose industry or fortune has obtained it. When we find them oppressed with their own abundance, luxurious without pleasure, idle without ease, impatient and querulous in themselves, and despised or hated by the rest of mankind, we shall soon be convinced, that if the real wants of our condition are satisfied, there remains little to be sought with solicitude, or desired with eagerness.

No. 59. Tuesday, October 9, 1750.

Est aliquid fatale malum per verba levare,
Hoc querulam Halcyonenque Pregnen facit:
Hoc erat in solo quare Pæantias antro
Vox fatigaret Lemnia saxa sua.
Strangulat inclusus dolor atque exæstuat intus
Cogitur et vires multiplicare suas. Ovid.

Complaining oft, gives respite to our grief;
From hence the wretched *Progne* sought relief.
Hence the *Pæantian* chief his fate deplores,
And vents his sorrow to the *Lemnian* shores:
In vain by secrecy we would assuage
Our cares; conceal'd they gather tenfold rage. F. Lewis.

It is common to distinguish men by the names of animals which they are supposed to resemble. Thus a hero is frequently termed a lion, and a statesman a fox, an extortioner gains the appellation of vulture, and a fop the title of monkey. There is also among the various anomalies of character, which a survey of the world exhibits, a species of beings in human form, which may be properly marked out as the screech-owls of mankind.

These screech-owls seem to be settled in an opinion that the great business of life is to complain, and that they were born for no other purpose than to disturb the happiness of others, to lessen the little comforts, and shorten the short pleasures of our condition, by painful remembrances of the past, or melancholy prognostics of the future; their only care is to crush the rising hope, to damp the kindling transport, and allay the golden hours of gaiety with the hateful dross of grief and suspicion.

To those whose weakness of spirits, or timidity of temper, subjects them to impressions from others, and who are apt to suffer by fascination, and catch the contagion of misery, it is extremely unhappy to live within the compass of a screech-owl's voice; for it will often fill their ears in the hours of dejection, terrify them with apprehensions, which their own thoughts would never have produced; and sadden, by intruded sorrows, the day which might have been passed in amusements or in business; it will burden the heart with unnecessary discontents, and weaken for a time that love of life which is necessary to the vigorous prosecution of any undertaking.

Though I have, like the rest of mankind, my failings and weaknesses, I have not yet, by friends or enemies, been charged with superstition; I never count the company which I en-

ter, and I look at the new moon indifferently over either shoulder. I have, like most other philosophers, often heard the cuckoo without money in my pocket, and have been sometimes reproached as fool-hardy for not turning down my eyes when a raven flew over my head. I never go home abruptly because a snake crosses my way, nor have any particular dread of a climactrical year: yet I confess that, with all my scorn of old women, and their tales, I consider it as an unhappy day when I happen to be greeted, in the morning, by Suspirius the screech-owl.

I have now known Suspirius fifty-eight years and four months, and have never yet passed an hour with him in which he has not made some attack upon my quiet. When we were first acquainted, his great topic was the misery of youth without riches; and whenever we walked out together he solaced me with a long enumeration of pleasures which, as they were beyond the reach of my fortune, were without the verge of my desires, and which I should never have considered as the objects of a wish, had not his unseasonable representations placed them in my sight.

Another of his topics is the neglect of merit, with which he never fails to amuse every man whom he sees not eminently fortunate. If he meets with a young officer, he always informs him of gentlemen whose personal courage is unquestioned, and whose military skill qualifies them to command armies, that have, notwithstanding all their merit, grown old with subaltern commissions. For a genius in the church, he is always provided with a curacy for life. The lawyer he informs of many men of great parts and deep study, who have never had an opportunity to speak in the courts: And meeting Serenus the physician, "Ah, doctor," says he, "what, a-foot still, when so many blockheads are rattling in their chariots? I told you seven years ago that you would never meet with encouragement, and I hope you will now take more notice, when I tell you that your Greek, and your diligence, and your honesty, will never enable you to live like yonder apothecary, who prescribes in his own shop, and laughs at the physician."

Suspirius has, in his time, intercepted fifteen authors in their way to the stage; persuaded nine and thirty merchants to retire from a prosperous trade for fear of bankruptcy, broke off an hundred and thirteen matches by prognostications of unhappiness, and enabled the small-pox to kill nineteen ladies, by perpetual alarms of the loss of beauty.

Whenever my evil stars bring us together, he never fails to represent to me the folly of my pursuits, and informs me

Those parallel circumstances and kindred images, to which we readily conform our minds, are, above all other writings, to be found in narratives of the lives of particular persons; and therefore no species of writing seems more worthy of cultivation than biography, since none can be more delightful or more useful, none can more certainly enchain the heart by irresistible interest, or more widely diffuse instruction to every diversity of condition.

The general and rapid narratives of history, which involve a thousand fortunes in the business of a day, and complicate innumerable incidents in one great transaction, afford few lessons applicable to private life, which derives its comforts and its wretchedness from the right or wrong management of things, which nothing but their frequency makes considerable, *Parva si non fiunt quotidie*, says Pliny, and which can have no place in those relations which never descend below the consultation of senates, the motions of armies, and the schemes of conspirators.

I have often thought that there has rarely passed a life of which a judicious and faithful narrative would not be useful. For, not only every man has, in the mighty mass of the world, great numbers in the same condition with himself, to whom his mistakes and miscarriages, escapes and expedients, would be of immediate and apparent use; but there is such an uniformity in the state of man, considered apart from adventitious and separable decorations and disguises, that there is scarce any possibility of good or ill, but is common to human kind. A great part of the time of those who are placed at the greatest distances by fortune, or by temper, must unavoidably pass in the same manner; and though, when the claims of nature are satisfied, caprice, and vanity, and accident, begin to produce discriminations and peculiarities, yet the eye is not very heedful or quick, which cannot discover the same causes still terminating their influence in the same effects, though sometimes accelerated, sometimes retarded, or perplexed by multiplied combinations. We are all prompted by the same motives, all deceived by the same fallacies, all animated by hope, obstructed by danger, entangled by desire, and seduced by pleasure.

It is frequently objected to relations of particular lives, that they are not distinguished by any striking or wonderful vicissitudes. The scholar who passed his life among his books, the merchant who conducted only his own affairs, the priest, whose sphere of action was not extended beyond that of his duty, are considered as no proper objects of public regard, however they might have excelled in their several sta-

Spem vultu simulat, premit altum corde dolorem.
His outward smiles conceal'd his inward smart. DRYDEN.

yet it cannot be denied, that he who complains acts like a man, like a social being, who looks for help from his fellow-creatures. Pity is to many of the unhappy a source of comfort in hopeless distresses, as it contributes to recommend them to themselves, by proving that they have not lost the regard of others; and heaven seems to indicate the duty even of barren compassion, by inclining us to weep for evils which we cannot remedy.

No. 60. SATURDAY, October 13, 1750.

Quid sid pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non,
Plenius et melius Chrysippo et Crantore dicit. HOR.

Whose works the beautiful and base contain,
Of vice and virtue more instructive rules,
Than all the sober sages of the schools. FRANCIS.

ALL joy or sorrow for the happiness or calamities of others is produced by an act of the imagination, that realizes the event however fictitious, or approximates it however remote, by placing us, for a time, in the condition of him whose fortune we contemplate; so that we feel, while the deception lasts, whatever motions would be excited by the same good or evil happening to ourselves.

Our passions are therefore more strongly moved, in proportion as we can more readily adopt the pains or pleasure proposed to our minds, by recognizing them as once our own, or considering them as naturally incident to our state of life. It is not easy for the most artful writer to give us an interest in happiness or misery, which we think ourselves never likely to feel, and with which we have never yet been made acquainted. Histories of the downfal of kingdoms, and revolutions of empires, are read with tranquillity; the imperial tragedy pleases common auditors only by its pomp of ornament and grandeur of ideas; and the man whose faculties have been engrossed by business, and whose heart never fluttered but at the rise or fall of the stocks, wonders how the attention can be seized, or the affection agitated, by a tale of love.

If now and then they condescend to inform the world of particular facts, they are not always so happy as to select the most important. I know not well what advantage posterity can receive from the only circumstance by which Tickell has distinguished Addison from the rest of mankind, *the irregularity of his pulse:* nor can I think myself overpaid for the time spent in reading the life of Malherb, by being enabled to relate after the learned biographer, that Malherb had two predominant opinions; one, that the looseness of a single woman might destroy all her boast of ancient descent; the other, that the French beggars made use very improperly and barbarously of the phrase *noble Gentleman*, because either word included the sense of both.

There are, indeed, some natural reasons why these narratives are often written by such as were not likely to give much instruction or delight, and why most accounts of particular persons are barren and useless. If life be delayed till interest and envy are at an end, we may hope for impartiality, but must expect little intelligence; for the incidents which give excellence to biography, are of a volatile and evanescent kind, such as soon escape the memory, and are rarely transmitted by tradition. We know how few can portray a living acquaintance, except by his most prominent and observable particularities, and the grosser features of his mind; and it may be easily imagined how much of this little knowledge may be lost in imparting it, and how soon a succession of copies will lose all resemblance of the original.

If the biographer writes from personal knowledge, and makes haste to gratify the public curiosity, there is danger lest his interest, his fear, his gratitude, or his tenderness, overpower his fidelity, and tempt him to conceal, if not to invent. There are many who think it an act of piety to hide the faults or failings of their friends, even when they can no longer suffer by their detection; we therefore see whole ranks of characters adorned with uniform ponegyric, and not to be known from one another, but by extrinsic and casual circumstances. "Let me remember," says Hale, "when I find myself inclined to pity a criminal, that there is likewise a pity due to the country." If we owe regard to the memory of the dead, there is yet more respect to be paid to knowledge, to virtue, and to truth.

No. 61. Tuesday, October 16, 1750.

Falsus honor juvat, et mendax infamia terret,
Quem nisi mendosum et mendacem? Hor.

False praise can charm, unreal shame control—
Whom but a vicious or a sickly soul? Francis.

TO THE RAMBLER.

Sir—It is extremely vexatious to a man of eager and thirsty curiosity to be placed at a great distance from the fountain of intelligence, and not only never to receive the current of report till it has satiated the greatest part of the nation, but at last to find it mudded in its course, and corrupted with taints or mixtures from every channel through which it flowed.

One of the chief pleasures of my life is to hear what passes in the world, to know what are the schemes of the politic, the aims of the busy, and the hopes of the ambitious; what changes of public measures are approaching; who is likely to be crushed in the collision of parties; who is climbing to the top of power, and who is tottering on the precipice of disgrace. But as it is very common for us to desire most what we are least qualified to obtain, I have suffered this appetite of news to outgrow all the gratifications which my present situation can afford it; for being placed in a remote country, I am condemned always to confound the future with the past, to form prognostications of events no longer doubtful, and to consider the expediency of schemes already executed or defeated. I am perplexed with a perpetual deception in my prospects, like a man pointing his telescope at a remote star, which, before the light reaches his eye, has forsaken the place from which it was emitted.

The mortification of being thus always behind the active world in my reflections and discoveries, is exceedingly aggravated by the petulance of those whose health, or business, or pleasure, brings them hither from London. For, without considering the insuperable disadvantages of my condition, and the unavoidable ignorance which absence must produce, they often treat me with the utmost superciliousness of contempt, for not knowing what no human sagacity can discover; and sometimes seem to consider me as a wretch scarcely worthy of human converse, when I happen to talk of the fortune of a bankrupt, or propose the healths of the

dead, when I warn them of mischiefs already incurred, or wish for measures that have been lately taken. They seem to attribute to the superiority of their intellects what they only owe to the accident of their condition, and think themselves indisputably entitled to airs of insolence and authority when they find another ignorant of facts, which, because they echoed in the streets of London, they suppose equally public in all other places, and known where they could neither be seen, related, nor conjectured.

To this haughtiness they are indeed too much encouraged by the respect which they receive amongst us, for no other reason than that they come from London. For no sooner is the arrival of one of the disseminators of knowledge known in the country, than we crowd about him from every quarter, and by innumerable inquiries flatter him into an opinion of his own importance. He sees himself surrounded by multitudes, who propose their doubts, and refer their controversies to him, as to a being descended from some nobler region, and he grows on a sudden oraculous and infallible, solves all difficulties, and sets all objections at defiance.

There is, in my opinion, great reason for suspecting, that they sometimes take advantage of this reverential modesty, and impose upon rustic understandings with a false show of universal intelligence; for I do not find that they are willing to own themselves ignorant of any thing, or that they dismiss any inquirer with a positive and decisive answer. The court, the city, the park and exchange, are to those men of unbounded observation equally familiar, and they are alike ready to tell the hour at which stocks will rise, or the ministry be changed.

A short residence at London entitles a man to knowledge, to wit, to politeness, and to a despotic and dictatorial power of prescribing to the rude multitude, whom he condescends to honour with a biennial visit; yet I know not well upon what motives, I have lately found myself inclined to cavil at this preception, and to doubt whether it be not, on some occasions, proper to withhold our veneration, till we are more authentically convinced of the merits of the claimant.

It is well remembered here, that, about seven years ago, one Frolic, a tall boy, with lank hair, remarkable for stealing eggs, and sucking them, was taken from the school in this parish, and sent up to London to study the law. As he had given amongst us no proofs of a genius designed by nature for extraordinary performances, he was, from the time of his departure, totally forgotten, nor was there any talk of his vices or virtues, his good or his ill fortune, till last summer

a report burst upon us, that Mr. Frolic had come down in the first post-chaise which this village had seen, having travelled with such rapidity that one of his postillions had broke his leg, and another narrowly escaped suffocation in a quicksand: but that Mr. Frolic seemed totally unconcerned, for such things were never heeded at London.

Mr. Frolic next day appeared among the gentlemen at their weekly meeting on the bowling-green, and now were seen the effects of a London education. His dress, his language, his ideas, were all new, and he did not much endeavour to conceal his contempt of every thing that differed from the opinions, or practice, of the modish world. He showed us the deformity of our skirts and sleeves, informed us where hats of the proper size were to be sold, and recommended to us the reformation of a thousand absurdities in our clothes, our cookery, and our conversation. When any of his phrases were unintelligible, he could not suppress the joy of confessed superiority, but frequently delayed the explanation, that he might enjoy his triumph over our barbarity.

When he is pleased to entertain us with a story, he takes care to crowd into it names of streets, squares, and buildings, with which he knows we are unacquainted. The favourite topics of his discourse are the pranks of drunkards, and the tricks put upon country gentlemen by porters and link-boys. When he is with ladies, he tells them of the innumerable pleasures to which he can introduce them; but never fails to hint how much they will be deficient, at their first arrival, in the knowledge of the town. What it is *to know the town*, he has not indeed hitherto informed us, though there is no phrase so frequent in his mouth, nor any science which he appears to think of so great a value, or so difficult attainment.

But my curiosity has been most engaged by the recital of his own adventures and achievements. I have heard of the union of various characters in single persons, but never met with such a constellation of great qualities as this man's narrative affords. Whatever has distinguished the hero; whatever has elevated the wit; whatever has endeared the lover, are all concentered in Mr. Frolic, whose life has for seven years, been a regular interchange of intrigues, dangers, and waggeries, and who has distinguished himself in every character that can be feared, envied, or admired.

I question whether all the officers of the royal navy can bring together, from all their journals, a collection of so many wonderful escapes as this man has known upon the Thames, on which he has been a thousand and a thousand

times on the point of perishing, sometimes by the terrours of foolish women in the same boat, sometimes by his own acknowledged imprudence in passing the river in the dark, and sometimes by shooting the bridge under which he has rencountered mountainous waves, and dreadful cataracts.

Nor less has been his temerity by land, nor fewer his hazards. He has reeled with giddiness on the top of the monument; he has crossed the street amidst the rush of coaches; he has been surrounded by robbers without number; he has headed parties at the play-house; he has scaled the windows of every toast, of whatever condition: he has been hunted for whole winters by his rivals: he has slept upon bulks. he has cut chairs, he has bilked coachmen; he has rescued his friends from the bailiffs; has knocked down the constable, has bullied the justice, and performed many other exploits, that have filled the town with wonder and with merriment.

But yet greater is the fame of his understanding than his bravery; for he informs us, that he is, at London, the established arbitrator of all points of honour, and the decisive judge of all performances of genius; that no musical performer is in reputation till the opinion of Frolic has ratified his pretensions; that the theatres suspend their sentence till he begins the clap or hiss, in which all are proud to concur: that no public entertainment has failed or succeeded, but because he opposed or favoured it; that all controversies at the gaming-table are referred to his determination; that he adjusts the ceremonial at every assembly, and prescribes every fashion of pleasure or of dress.

With every man whose name occurs in the papers of the day, he is intimately acquainted; and there are very few posts, either in the state or army, of which he has not more or less influenced the disposal. He has been very frequently consulted both upon war and peace; but the time is not yet come when the nation shall know how much it is indebted to the genius of Frolic.

Yet, notwithstanding all these declarations, I cannot hitherto persuade myself to see that Mr. Frolic has more wit, or knowledge, or courage, than the rest of mankind, or that any uncommon enlargement of his faculties has happened in the time of his absence. For when he talks on subjects known to the rest of the company, he has no advantage over us, but by catches of interruption, briskness of interrogation, and pertness of contempt; and therefore if he has stunned the world with his name, and gained a place in the first ranks of humanity, I cannot but conclude, that either a little understanding confers eminence at London, or that Mr. Frolic

thinks us unworthy of the exertion of his powers, or that his faculties are benumbed by rural stupidity, as the magnetic needle loses its animation in the polar climes.

I would not, however, like many hasty philosophers, search after the cause till I am certain of the effect; and therefore I desire to be informed, whether you have yet heard the great name of Mr. Frolic. If he is celebrated by other tongues than his own, I shall willingly propagate his praise; but if he has swelled among us with empty boasts, and honours conferred only by himself, I shall treat him with rustic sincerity, and drive him as an impostor from this part of the kingdom to some region of more credulity.

I am, &c.

RURICOLA.

No. 62. SATURDAY, October 20, 1750.

Nunc ego Triptolemi cuperem conscendere currus,
Misit in ignotam qui rude semen humum:
Nunc ego Medeæ vellem frænare dracones,
Quos habuit fugiens arva, Corinthe, tua;
Nunc ego jactandas optarem sumere pennas,
Sive tuas, Perseu; Dædale, sive tuas. OVID.

Now would I mount his car, whose bounteous hand
First sow'd with teeming seed the furrow'd land:
Now to *Medea's* dragons fix my reins,
That swiftly bore her from *Corinthian* plains:
Now on *Dædalian* waxen pinions stray,
Or those which wafted *Perseus* on his way. F. LEWIS.

TO THE RAMBLER.

SIR—I am a young woman of very large fortune, which, if my parents would have been persuaded to comply with the rules and customs of the polite part of mankind, might long since have raised me to the highest honours of the female world; but so strangely have they hitherto contrived to waste my life, that I am now on the borders of twenty, without having ever danced but at our monthly assembly, or been toasted but among a few gentlemen of the neighbourhood, or seen any company in which it was worth a wish to be distinguished.

My father having impaired his patrimony in soliciting a place at court, at last grew wise enough to cease his pursuit; and to repair the consequences of expensive attendance and negligence of his affairs, married a lady much older than

himself, who had lived in the fashionable world till she was considered as an incumbrance upon parties of pleasure, and as I can collect from incidental informations, retired from gay assemblies just time enough to escape the mortification of universal neglect.

She was, however, still rich, and not yet wrinkled; my father was too distressfully embarrassed to think much on any thing but the means of extrication, and though it is not likely that he wanted the delicacy which polite conversation will always produce in understandings not remarkably defective, yet he was contented with a match, by which he might be set free from inconveniences, that would have destroyed all the pleasures of imagination, and taken from softness and beauty the power of delighting.

As they were both somewhat disgusted with the treatment in the world, and married, though without any dislike of each other, yet principally for the sake of setting themselves free from dependence on caprice or fashion, they soon retired into the country, and devoted their lives to rural business and diversions.

They had not much reason to regret the change of their situation; for their vanity, which had so long been tormented by neglect and disappointment, was here gratified with every honour that could be paid them. Their long familiarity with public life made them the oracles of all those who aspired to intelligence or politeness. My father dictated politics, my mother described the mode, and it was sufficient to entitle any family to some consideration, that they were known to visit at Mrs. Courtley's.

In this state they were, to speak in the style of novelists, made happy by the birth of your correspondent. My parents had no other child, I was therefore not brow-beaten by a saucy brother, or lost in a multitude of coheiresses, whose fortunes being equal, would probably have conferred equal merit, and procured equal regard; and as my mother was now old, my understanding and my person had fair play, my inquiries were not checked, my advances towards importance were not repressed, and I was soon suffered to tell my own opinions, and early accustomed to hear my own praises.

By these accidental advantages I was much exalted above the young ladies with whom I conversed, and was treated by them with great deference. I saw none who did not seem to confess my superiority, and to be held in awe by the splendour of my appearance; for the fondness of my father made him pleased to see me dressed, and my mother had no vanity

nor expenses to hinder her from incurring with his inclination.

Thus, Mr. Rambler, I lived without much desire after any thing beyond the circle of our visits; and here I should have quietly continued to portion out my time among my books, and my needle, and my company, had not my curiosity been every moment excited by the conversation of my parents, who, whenever they sit down to familiar prattle, and endeavour to entertain each other, immediately transport themselves to London, and relate some adventure in a hackney-coach, some frolic at a masquerade, some conversation in the Park, or some quarrel at an assembly, display the magnificence of a birthnight, relate the conquests of maids of honour, or give a history of diversions, shows, and entertainments, which I had never known but from their accounts.

I am so well versed in the history of the gay world, that I can relate, with great punctuality, the lives of all the last race of wits and beauties; can enumerate, with exact chronology, the whole sucsession of celebrated singers, musicians, tragedians, comedians, and harlequins; can tell to the last twenty years all the changes of fashions: and am, indeed, a complete antiquary with respect to headdresses, dances, and operas.

You will easily imagine, Mr. Rambler, that I could not hear these narratives, for sixteen years together, without suffering some impression, and wishing myself nearer to those places where every hour brings new pleasure, and life is diversified with an unexhausted succession of felicity.

I indeed often asked my mother why she left a place which she recollected with so much delight, and why she did not visit London once a year, like some other ladies, and initiate me in the world by showing its amusements, its grandeur, and its variety. But she always told me that the days which she had seen were such as will never come again, that all diversion is now degenerated, that the conversation of the present age is insipid, that their fashions are unbecoming, their customs absurd, and their morals corrupt; that there is no ray left of the genius which enlightened the times that she remembers; that no one who had seen, or heard, the ancient performers, would be able to bear the bunglers of this despicable age; and that there is now neither politeness, nor pleasure, nor virtue, in the world. She therefore assures me that she consults my happiness by keeping me at home, for I should now find nothing but vexation and disgust, and she should be ashamed to see me pleased with such fopperies and

trifles, as take up the thoughts of the present set of young people.

With this answer I was kept quiet for several years, and thought it no great inconvenience to be confined to the country, till last summer a young gentleman and his sister came down to pass a few months with one of our neighbours. They had generally no great regard for the country ladies, but distinguished me by a particular complaisance, and, as we grew intimate, gave me such a detail of the elegance, the splendour, the mirth, the happiness, of the town, that I am resolved to be no longer buried in ignorance and obscurity, but to share with other wits the joy of being admired, and divide with other beauties the empire of the world.

I do not find, Mr. Rambler, upon a deliberate and impartial comparison, that I am excelled by Belinda in beauty, in wit, in judgment, in knowledge, or in any thing, but a kind of gay, lively familiarity, by which she mingles with strangers as with persons long acquainted, and which enables her to display her powers without any obstruction, hesitation, or confusion. Yet she can relate a thousand civilities paid to her in public, can produce, from a hundred lovers, letters filled with praises, protestations, ecstacies, and despair; has been handed by dukes to her chair; has been the occasion of innumerable quarrels; has paid twenty visits in an afternoon; been invited to six balls in an evening, and been forced to retire to lodgings in the country from the importunity of courtship, and the fatigue of pleasure.

I tell you, Mr. Rambler, I will stay here no longer. I have at last prevailed upon my mother to send me to town, and shall set out in three weeks on the grand expedition. I intend to live in public, and to crowd into the winter every pleasure which money can purchase, and every honour which beauty can obtain.

But this tedious interval how shall I endure? Cannot you alleviate the misery of delay by some pleasing description of the entertainments of the town? I can read, I can talk, I can think of nothing else; and if you will not sooth my impatience, heighten my ideas, and animate my hopes, you may write for those who have more leisure, but are not to expect any longer the honour of being read by those eyes which are now intent only on conquest and destruction.

RHODOCLIA.

No. 63. Tuesday, October 23, 1750.

——Habebat sæpe ducentos,
Sæpe decem servos; modò reges atque tetrarchas,
Omnia magna loquens: modo, sit mihi mensa tripes, et
Concha salis puri, et toga quæ defendere frigus,
Quamvis crassa, queat. Hor.

Now with two hundred slaves he crowds his train;
Now walks with ten. In high and haughty strain
At morn, of kings and governors he prates;
At night—"A frugal table, O ye fates,
"A little shell the sacred salt to hold,
"And clothes, tho' coarse, to keep me from the cold."

Francis

It has been remarked, perhaps by every writer who has left behind him observations upon life, that no man is pleased with his present state; which proves equally unsatisfactory, says Horace, whether fallen upon by chance, or chosen with deliberation; we are always disgusted with some circumstance or other of our situation, and imagine the condition of others more abundant in blessings, or less exposed to calamities.

This universal discontent has been generally mentioned with great severity of censure, as unreasonable in itself, since of two, equally envious of each other, both cannot have the largest share of happiness, and as tending to darken life with unnecessary gloom, by withdrawing our minds from the contemplation and enjoyment of that happiness which our state affords us, and fixing our attention upon foreign objects, which we only behold to depress ourselves, and increase our misery by injurious comparisons.

When this opinion of the felicity of others predominates in the heart, so as to excite resolutions of obtaining, at whatever price, the condition to which such transcendent privileges are supposed to be annexed; when it bursts into action, and produces fraud, violence, and injustice, it is to be pursued with all the rigour of legal punishments. But while operating only upon the thoughts, it disturbs none but him who has happened to admit it, and, however it may interrupt content, makes no attack on piety or virtue, I cannot think it so far criminal or ridiculous, but that it may deserve some pity, and admit some excuse.

That all are equally happy, or miserable, I suppose none is sufficiently enthusiastical to maintain; because though we cannot judge of the condition of others, yet every man has

found frequent vicissitudes in his own state, and must therefore be convinced that life is susceptible of more or less felicity. What then shall forbid us to endeavour the alteration of that which is capable of being improved, and to grasp at augmentations of good, when we know it possible to be increased, and believe that any particular change of situation will increase it?

If he that finds himself uneasy may reasonably make efforts to rid himself from vexation, all mankind have a sufficient plea for some degree of restlessness, and the fault seems to be little more than too much temerity of conclusion, in favour of something not yet experienced, and too much readiness to believe, that the misery which our own passions and appetites produce, is brought upon us by accidental causes, and external efficients.

It is, indeed, frequently discovered by us, that we complained too hastily of peculiar hardships, and imagined ourselves distinguished by embarrassments, in which other classes of men are equally entangled. We often change a lighter for a greater evil, and wish ourselves restored again to the state from which we thought it desirable to be delivered. But this knowledge, though it is easily gained by the trial, is not always attainable any other way; and that errour cannot justly be reproached, which reason could not obviate nor prudence avoid.

To take a view at once distinct and comprehensive of human life, with all its intricates of combination, and varieties of connexion, is beyond the power of moral intelligences. Of the state with which practice has not acquainted us we snatch a glimpse, we discern a point, and regulate the rest by passion, and by fancy. In this inquiry every favourite prejudice, every innate desire is busy to deceive us. We are unhappy, at least less happy than our nature seems to admit; we necessarily desire the melioration of our lot; what we desire we very reasonably seek, and what we seek we are naturally eager to believe that we have found. Our confidence is often disappointed, but our reason is not convinced, and there is no man who does not hope for something which he has not, though perhaps his wishes lie unactive, because he forsees the difficulty of attainment. As among the numerous students of Hermetic philosophy, not one appears to have desisted from the task of transmutation, from conviction of its impossibility, but from weariness of toil, or impatience of delay, a broken body, or exhausted fortune.

Irresolution and mutability are often the faults of men whose views are wide, and whose imagination is vigorous

and excursive, because they cannot confine their thoughts within their own boundaries of action, but are continually ranging over all the scenes of human existence, and consequently are often apt to conceive that they fall upon new regions of pleasure, and start new possibilities of happiness. Thus they are busied with a perpetual succession of schemes, and pass their lives in alternate elation and sorrow, for want of that calm and immoveable acquiescence in their condition, by which men of slower understandings are fixed for ever to a certain point, or led on in the plain beaten track which their fathers and grandsires have trod before them.

Of two conditions of life equally inviting to the prospect, that will always have the disadvantage which we have already tried; because the evils which we have felt we cannot extenuate; and though we have perhaps from nature, the power, as well of aggravating the calamity which we fear, as of heightening the blessing we expect, yet in those meditations which we indulge by choice, and which are not forced upon the mind by necessity, we have always the art of fixing our regard upon the more pleasing images, and suffer hope to dispose the lights by which we look upon futurity.

The good and ill of different modes of life are sometimes so equally opposed, that perhaps no man ever yet made his choice between them upon a full conviction, and adequate knowledge; and therefore fluctuation of wills is not more wonderful, when they are proposed to the election, than oscillations of a beam charged with equal weights. The mind no sooner imagines itself determined by some prevalent advantage, than some convenience of equal weight is discovered on the other side, and the resolutions which are suggested by the nicest examination, are often repented as soon as they are taken.

Eumenes, a young man of great abilities, inherited a large estate from a father, long eminent in conspicuous employments. His father, harassed with competitions, and perplexed with multiplicity of business, recommended the quiet of a private station with so much force, that Eumenes for some years resisted every motion of ambitious wishes; but being once provoked by the sight of oppression, which he could not redress, he began to think it the duty of an honest man to enable himself to protect others, and gradually felt a a desire of greatness, excited by a thousand projects of advantage to his country. His fortune placed him in the senate, his knowledge and eloquence advanced him at court, and he possessed that authority and influence which he had resolved to exert for the happiness of mankind.

He now became acquainted with greatness, and was in a short time convinced, that in proportion as the power of doing well is enlarged, the temptations to do ill are multiplied and enforced. He felt himself every moment in danger of being either seduced or driven from his honest purposes. Sometimes a friend was to be gratified, and sometimes a rival to be crushed, by means which his conscience could not approve. Sometimes he was forced to comply with the prejudices of the public, and sometimes with the schemes of the ministry. He was by degrees wearied with perpetual struggles to unite policy and virtue, and went back to retirement as the shelter of innocence, persuaded that he could only hope to benefit mankind by a blameless example of private virtue. Here he spent some years in tranquillity and beneficence; but finding that corruption increased, and false opinions in government prevailed, he thought himself again summoned to posts of public trust, from which new evidence of his own weakness again determined him to retire.

Thus men may be made inconstant by virtue and by vice, by too much or too little thought, yet inconstancy, however dignified by its motives, is always to be avoided, because life allows us but a small time for inquiry and experiment, and he that steadily endeavours at excellence, in whatever employment, will more benefit mankind than he that hesitates in choosing his part till he is called to the performance. The traveller that resolutely follows a rough and winding path, will sooner reach the end of his journey, than he that is always changing his direction, and wastes the hours of daylight in looking for smoother ground, and shorter passages.

No. 64. Saturday, October 27, 1750.

Idem velle, et idem nolle, ea demum firma amicitia est. Sallust

To live in friendship is to have the same desires and the same aversions.

When Socrates was building himself a house at Athens, being asked by one that observed the littleness of the design, why a man so eminent would not have an abode more suitable to his dignity? he replied, that he should think himself sufficiently accommodated, if he could see that narrow habitation filled with real friends. Such was the opinion of this great master of human life concerning the infrequency of such an

union of minds as might deserve the name of friendship, that among the multitudes whom vanity or curiosity, civility or veneration, crowded about him, he did not expect, that very spacious apartments would be necessary to contain all that should regard him with sincere kindness, or adhere to him with steady fidelity.

So many qualities are indeed requisite to the possibility of friendship, and so many accidents must concur to its rise and its continuance, that the greatest part of mankind content themselves without it, and supply its place as they can, with interest and dependence.

Multitudes are unqualified for a constant and warm reciprocation of benevolence, as they are incapacitated for any other elevated excellence, by perpetual attention to their interest, and unresisting subjection to their passions. Long habits may superinduce inability to deny any desire, or repress, by superior motives, the importunities of any immediate gratification, and an inveterate selfishness will imagine all advantages diminished in proportion as they are communicated.

But not only this hateful and confirmed corruption, but many varieties of disposition, not inconsistent with common degrees of virtue, may exclude friendship from the heart. Some ardent enough in their benevolence, and defective neither in officiousness nor liberality, are mutable and uncertain, soon attracted by new objects, disgusted without offence, and alienated without enmity. Others are soft and flexible, easily influenced by reports or whispers, ready to catch alarms from every dubious circumstance, and to listen to every suspicion which envy and flattery shall suggest, to follow the opinion of every confident adviser, and move by the impulse of the last breath. Some are impatient of contradiction, more willing to go wrong by their own judgment, than to be indebted for a better or a safer way to the sagacity of another, inclined to consider counsel as insult, and inquiry as want of confidence, and to confer their regard on no other terms than unreserved submission, and implicit compliance. Some are dark and involved, equally careful to conceal good and bad purposes: and pleased with producing effects by invisible means, and showing their design only in its execution. Others are universally communicative, alike open to every eye, and equally profuse of their own secrets and those of others, without the necessary vigilance of caution, or the honest arts of prudent integrity, ready to accuse without malice, and to betray without treachery. Any of these may be useful to the community, and pass through the world with the reputation of

good purposes and uncorrupted morals, but they are unfit for close and tender intimacies. He cannot properly be chosen for a friend, whose kindness is exhaled by its own warmth, or frozen by the first blast of slander; he cannot be a useful counsellor who will hear no opinion but his own; he will not much invite confidence whose principal maxim is to suspect; nor can the candour and frankness of that man be much esteemed, who spreads his arms to humankind, and makes every man, without distinction, a denizen of his bosom.

That friendship may be at once fond and lasting, there must not only be equal virtue on each part, but virtue of the same kind; not only the same end must be proposed, but the same means must be approved by both. We are often, by superficial accomplishments and accidental endearments, induced to love those whom we cannot esteem; we are sometimes, by great abilities, and incontestible evidences of virtue, compelled to esteem those whom we cannot love. But friendship, compounded of esteem and love, derives from one its tenderness, and its permanence from the other; and therefore requires not only that its candidates should gain the judgment, but that they should attract the affections; that they should not only be firm in the day of distress, but gay in the hour of jollity; not only useful in exigencies, but pleasing in familiar life; their presence should give cheerfulness as well as courage, and dispel alike the gloom of fear and of melanchoiy.

To this mutual complacency is generally requisite an uniformity of opinion, at least of those active and conspicuous principles which discriminate parties in government, and sects in religion, and which every day operate more or less on the common business of life. For though great tenderness has, perhaps, been sometimes known to continue between men eminent in contrary factions; yet such friends are to be shown rather as prodigies than examples, and it is no more proper to regulate our conduct by such instances, than to leap a precipice, because some have fallen from it and escaped with life.

It cannot but be extremely difficult to preserve private kindness in the midst of public opposition, in which will necessarily be involved a thousand incidents extending their influence to conversation and privacy. Men engaged, by moral or religious motives, in contrary parties, will generally look with different eyes upon every man, and decide almost every question upon different principles. When such occasions of dispute happen, to comply is to betray our cause, and to maintain friendship by ceasing to deserve it; to be silent is to

lose the happiness and dignity of independence, to live in perpetual constraint, and to desert, if not to betray: and who shall determine which of two friends shall yield, where neither believes himself mistaken, and both confess the importance of the question? What then remains but contradiction and debate? and from those what can be expected, but acrimony and vehemence, the insolence of triumph, the vexation of defeat, and, in time a weariness of contest, and an extinction of benevolence? Exchange of endearments and intercourse of civility may continue, indeed, as boughs may for a while be verdant, when the root is wounded, but the poison of discord is infused, and though the countenance may preserve its smile, the heart is hardening and contracting.

That man will not be long agreeable, whom we see only in times of seriousness and severity; and therefore to maintain the softness and serenity of benevolence, it is necessary that friends partake each other's pleasures as well as cares, and be led to the same diversions by similitude of taste. This is, however, not to be considered as equally indispensable with conformity of principles, because any man may honestly, according to the precepts of Horace, resign the gratifications of taste to the humour of another, and friendship may well deserve the sacrifice of pleasure, though not of conscience.

It was once confessed to me, by a painter, that no professor of his art ever loved another. This declaration is so far justified by the knowledge of life, as to damp the hopes of warm and constant friendship between men whom their studies have made competitors, and whom every favourer and every censurer are hourly inciting against each other. The utmost expectation that experience can warrant, is, that they should forbear open hostilities and secret machinations, and, when the whole fraternity is attacked, be able to unite against a common foe. Some, however, though few, may perhaps be found in whom emulation has not been able to overpower generosity, who are distinguished from lower beings by nobler motives than the love of fame, and can preserve the sacred flame of friendship from the gusts of pride, and the rubbish of interest.

Friendship is seldom lasting but between equals, or where the superiority on one side is reduced by some equivalent advantage on the other. Benefits which cannot be repaid, and obligations which cannot be discharged, are not commonly found to increase affection; they excite gratitude indeed, and heighten veneration; but commonly take away that easy freedom and familiarity of intercourse, without which, though there may be fidelity, and zeal, and admiration, there cannot

be friendship. Thus imperfect are all earthly blessings; the great effect of friendship is beneficence, yet by the first act of uncommon kindness it is endangered, like plants that bear their fruit and die. Yet this consideration ought not to restrain bounty, or repress compassion; for duty is to be preferred before convenience, and he that loses part of the pleasures of friendship by his generosity, gains in its place the gratulation of his conscience.

No. 65. Tuesday, October 30, 1750.

——Garrit aniles
Ex re fabellas.——

The cheerful sage, when solemn dictates fail,
Conceals the moral counsel in a tale.

Obidah, the son of Abensina, left the caravansera early in the morning, and pursued his journey through the plains of Indostin. He was fresh and vigorous with rest; he was animated with hope; he was incited by desire; he walked swiftly forward over the vallies, and saw the hills gradually rising before him. As he passed along, his ears were delighted with the morning song of the bird of paradise, he was fanned by the last flutters of the sinking breeze, and sprinkled with dew by groves of spices; he sometimes contemplated the towring height of the oak, monarch of the hills: and sometimes caught the gentle fragrance of the primrose, eldest daughter of the spring: all his senses were gratified, and all care was banished from his heart.

Thus he went on till the sun approached his meridian, and the increasing heat preyed upon his strength; he then looked round about him for some more commodious path. He saw, on his right hand, a grove that seemed to wave its shades as a sign of invitation; he entered it, and found the coolness and verdure irresistably pleasant. He did not, however, forget whither he was travelling, but found a narrow way boarded with flowers, which appeared to have the same direction with the main road, and was pleased that, by this happy experiment, he had found means to unite pleasure with business, and to gain the rewards of diligence without suffering its fatigues. He, therefore, still continued to walk for a time, without the least remission of his ardour, except that he was sometimes tempted to stop by the music of the birds, whom the heat had assembled in the shade; and sometimes amused himself with

plucking the flowers that covered the banks on either side, or the fruits that hung upon the branches. At last the green path began to decline from its first tendency, and to wind among hills and thickets, cooled with fountains and murmuring with water-falls. Here Obidah paused for a time, and began to consider whether it were longer safe to forsake the known and common track; but remembring that the heat was now in its greatest violence, and that the plain was dusty and uneven, he resolved to pursue the new path, which he supposed only to make a few meanders, in compliance with the varieties of the ground, and to end at last in the common road.

Having thus calmed his solicitude, he renewed his pace, though he suspected that he was not gaining ground. This uneasiness of his mind inclined him to lay hold on every new object, and give way to every sensation that might sooth or divert him. He listened to every echo, he mounted every hill for a fresh prospect, he turned aside to every cascade, and pleased himself with tracing the course of a gentle river that rolled among the trees, and watered a large region with innumerable circumvolutions. In these amusements the hours passed away uncounted, his deviations had perplexed his memory, and he knew not towards what point to travel. He stood pensive and confused, afraid to go forward lest he should go wrong, yet conscious that the time of loitering was now past. While he was thus tortured with uncertainty, the sky was overspread with clouds, the day vanished from before him, and a sudden tempest gathered round his head. He was now roused by his danger to a quick and painful remembrance of his folly; he now saw how happiness is lost when ease is consulted; he lamented the unmanly impatience that prompted him to seek shelter in the grove, and despised the petty curiosity that led him on from trifle to trifle. While he was thus reflecting, the air grew blacker, and a clap of thunder broke his meditation.

He now resolved to do what remained yet in his power, to tread back the ground which he had passed, and try to find some issue where the wood might open into the plain. He prostrated himself on the ground, and commended his life to the Lord of nature. He rose with confidence and tranquillity, and pressed on with his sabre in his hand, for the beasts of the desert were in motion, and on every hand were heard the mingled howls of rage and fear, and ravage and expiration; all the horrours of darkness and solitude surrounded him: the winds roared in the woods, and the torrents tumbled from the hills.

———χείμαρροι ποταμοὶ κατ' ὄρεσφι ῥέοντες
'Ες μισγαγκειαν συμβαλλεῖον ὄβριμον ὕδωρ,
Τωνδε τε τηλόσε δυπον ἐν ὑρεσιν ἔκλυε ποιμην.

Work'd into sudden rage by wintry show'rs,
Down the steep hill the roaring torrent pours;
The mountain shepherd hears the distant noise.

Thus forlorn and distressed, he wandered through the wild, without knowing whither he was going, or whether he was every moment drawing nearer to safety or to destruction. At length not fear but labour began to overcome him; his breath grew short, and his knees trembled, and he was on the point of lying down in resignation to his fate, when he beheld through the brambles the glimmer of a taper. He advanced towards the light, and finding that it proceeded from the cottage of a hermit, he called humbly at the door, and obtained admission. The old man set before him such provisions as he had collected for himself, on which Obidah fed with eagerness and gratitude.

When the repast was over, "Tell me," said the hermit, "by what chance thou hast been brought hither; I have been now twenty years an inhabitant of the wilderness, in which I never saw a man before." Obidah then related the occurrences of his journey, without any concealment or palliation.

"Son," said the hermit, "let the errours and follies, the dangers and escape of this day, sink deep into thy heart. Remember, my son, that human life is the journey of a day. We rise in the morning of youth, full of vigour and full of expectation; we set forward with spirit and hope, with gaiety and diligence, and travel on a while in the straight road of piety, towards the mansions of rest. In a short time we remit our fervour, and endeavour to find some mitigation of our duty, and some more easy means of obtaining the same end. We then relax our vigour, and resolve no longer to be terrified with crimes at a distance, but rely upon our own constancy, and venture to approach what we resolve never to touch. We thus enter the bowers of ease, and repose in the shades of security. Here the heart softens and vigilance subsides; we are then willing to inquire whether another advance cannot be made, and whether we may not, at least, turn our eyes upon the gardens of pleasure. We approach them with scruple and hesitation; we enter them, but enter timorous and trembling, and always hope to pass through them without losing the road of virtue, which we, for a while, keep in our sight, and to which we propose to return. But tempta-

tion succeeds temptation, and one compliance prepares us for another; we in time lose the happiness of innocence, and solace our disquiet with sensual gratifications. By degrees we let fall the remembrance of our original intention, and quit the only adequate object of rational desire. We entangle ourselves in business, imerge ourselves in luxury, and rove through the labyrinths of inconstancy, till the darkness of old age begins to invade us, and disease and anxiety obstruct our way. We then look back upon our lives with horrour, with sorrow, with repentence; and wish, that we had not forsaken the ways of virtue. Happy are they, my son, who shall learn from thy example not to despair, but shall remember, that though the day is past, and their strength is wasted, there yet remains one effort to be made; that reformation is never hopeless, nor sincere endeavours ever unassisted; that the wanderer may at length return after all his errours, and that he who implores strength and courage from above, shall find danger and difficulty give way before him. Go now, my son, to thy repose, commit thyself to the care of Omnipotence, and when the morning calls again to toil, begin anew thy journey and thy life."

No. 66. Saturday, November 3, 1750.

——Pauci dignoscere possunt
Vera bona, atque illis multum diversa, remota
Erroris nebula. Juv.

——How few
Know their own good; or, knowing it, pursue?
How void of reason are our hopes and fears? Dryden.

The folly of human wishes and pursuits has always been a standing subject of mirth and declamation, and has been ridiculed and lamented from age to age; till perhaps the fruitless repetition of complaints and censures may be justly numbered among the subjects of censure and complaint.

Some of these instructors of mankind have not contented themselves with checking the overflows of passion, and lopping the exuberance of desire, but have attempted to destroy the root as well as the branches; and not only to confine the mind within bounds, but to smooth it for ever by a dead calm. They have employed their reason and eloquence to persuade us, that nothing is worth the wish of a wise man, have represented all earthly good and evil as indifferent, and

counted among vulgar errours the dread of pain, and the love of life.

It is almost always the unhappiness of a victorious disputant, to destroy his own authority by claiming too many consequences, or diffusing his proposition to an indefensible extent. When we have heated our zeal in a cause, and elated our confidence with success, we are naturally inclined to pursue the same train of reasoning, to establish some collateral truth, to remove some adjacent difficulty, and to take in the whole comprehension of our system. As a prince, in the ardour of acquisition, is willing to secure his first conquest by the addition of another, add fortress to fortress, and city to city, till despair and opportunity turn his enemies upon him, and he loses in a moment the glory of a reign.

The philosophers having found an easy victory over those desires which we produce in ourselves, and which terminate in some imaginary state of happiness unknown and unattainable, proceeded to make further inroads upon the heart, and attacked at last our senses and our instincts. They continued to war upon nature with arms, by which only folly could be conquered; they therefore lost the trophies of their former combats, and were considered no longer with reverence or regard.

Yet it cannot be with justice denied, that these men have been very useful monitors, and have left many proofs of strong reason, deep penetration, and accurate attention to the affairs of life, which it is now our business to separate from the foam of a boiling imagination, and to apply judiciously to our own use. They have shown that most of the conditions of life, which raise the envy of the timorous, and rouse the ambition of the daring, are empty shows of felicity, which, when they become familiar, lose their power of delighting; and that the most prosperous and exalted have very few advantages over a meaner and more obscure fortune, when their dangers and solicitudes are balanced against their equipage, their banquets, and their palaces.

It is natural for every man uninstructed to murmur at his condition, because, in the general infelicity of life, he feels his own miseries, without knowing that they are common to all the rest of the species; and, therefore, though he will not be less sensible of pain by being told that others are equally tormented, he will at least be freed from the temptation of seeking, by perpetual changes, that ease which is no where to be found; and, though his disease still continues, he escapes the hazard of exasperating it by remedies.

The gratifications which affluence of wealth, extent of

power, and eminence of reputation confer, must be always, by their nature, confined to a very small number: and the life of the greater part of mankind must be lost in empty wishes and painful comparisons, were not the balm of philosophy shed upon us, and our discontent at the appearances of an unequal distribution soothed and appeased.

It seemed, perhaps, below the dignity of the great masters of moral learning, to descend to familiar life, and caution mankind against that petty ambition which is known among us by the name of Vanity; which yet had been an undertaking not unworthy of the longest beard, and most solemn austerity. For though the passions of little minds, acting in low stations, do not fill the world with bloodshed and devastations, or mark, by great events, the periods of time, yet they torture the breast on which they seize, infest those that are placed within the reach of their influence, destroy private quiet and private virtue, and undermine insensibly the happiness of the world.

The desire of excellence is laudable, but is very frequently ill directed. We fall, by chance, into some class of mankind, and, without consulting nature or wisdom, resolve to gain their regard by those qualities which they happen to esteem. I once knew a man remarkably dim-sighted, who, by conversing much with country gentlemen, found himself irresistibly determined to sylvan honours. His great ambition was to shoot flying, and he therefore spent whole days in the woods pursuing game; which, before he was near enough to see them, his approach frighted away.

When it happens that the desire tends to objects which produce no competition, it may be overlooked with some indulgence, because, however fruitless or absurd, it cannot have ill effects upon the morals. But most of our enjoyments owe their value to the peculiarity of possession, and when they are rated at too high a value, give occasion to stratagems of malignity, and incite opposition, hatred, and defamation. The contest of two rural beauties for preference and distinction, is often sufficiently keen and rancorous to fill their breasts with all those passions, which are generally thought the curse only of senates, of armies, and of courts; and the rival dancers of an obscure assembly have their partisans and abettors, often not less exasperated against each other, than those who are promoting the interest of rival monarchs.

It is common to consider those whom we find infected with an unreasonable regard for trifling accomplishments, as chargeable with all the consequences of their folly, and as the authors of their own unhappiness: but, perhaps, those

whom we thus scorn or detest, have more claim to tenderness than has been yet allowed them. Before we permit our severity to break loose upon any fault or errour, we ought surely to consider how much we have countenanced or promoted it. We see multitudes busy in the pursuit of riches, at the expense of wisdom and of virtue; but we see the rest of mankind approving their conduct, and inciting their eagerness, by paying that regard and deference to wealth, which wisdom and virtue only can deserve. We see women universally jealous of the reputation of their beauty, and frequently look with contempt on the care with which they study their complexions, endeavour to preserve or to supply the bloom of youth, regulate every ornament, twist their hair into curls, and shade their faces from the weather. We recommend the care of their nobler part, and tell them how little addition is made by all their arts to the graces of the mind. But when was it known that female goodness or knowledge was able to attract that officiousness, or inspire that ardour, which beauty produces whenever it appears? And with what hope can we endeavour to persuade the ladies, that the time spent at the toilet is lost in vanity, when they have every moment some new conviction, that their interest is more effectually promoted by a riband well disposed, than by the brighest act of heroic virtue?

In every instance of vanity it will be found that the blame ought to be shared among more than it generlly reaches: all who exalt trifles by immoderate praise, or instigate needless emulation by invidious incitements, are to be considered as perverters of reason, and corrupters of the world; and since every man is obliged to promote happiness and virtue, he should be careful not to mislead unwary minds, by appearing to set too high a value upon things by which no real excellence is conferred.

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Books of Reading 150.

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